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HARIJAN

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[TWO ANNAS

FOR MUSLIM FRIENDS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I have read with attention Quaid-e-Azam's reply to my article in *Harijan*. "Pakistan" according to him "in a nutshell" "is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be wholly treated as an independent and Sovereign State." This Sovereign State can conceivably go to war against the one of which it was but yesterday a part. It can also equally conceivably make treaties with other States. All this can certainly be had, but surely not by the willing consent of the rest.

But it seems he does not want it by consent. For he says, "Pakistan is an article of faith with Muslim India and we depend upon nobody except ourselves for the achievement of our goal." How is one to offer one's service in these circumstances?

But later he gives me hope, for he says: "Show your sincerity and frankness for an honourable settlement." In order to show both, I wrote the article to which the Quaid-e-Azam has objected. How else is one to show sincerity and frankness except through one's action and speech or pen?

Let me state my limitations. I cannot speak as a mere Hindu, for my Hinduism includes all religions. I can speak only as an Indian. If Pakistan as defined above is an article of faith with him, indivisible India is equally an article of faith with me. Hence there is a stalemate.

But today there is neither Pakistan nor Hindustan. It is Englistan. So I say to all India, let us first convert it into the original Hindustan and then adjust all rival claims. This is surely clear. After the restoration of India to the nation, there will be no Central Government. The representatives will have to construct it. It may be one Hindustan or many Pakistans.

If the Quaid-e-Azam really wants a settlement, I am more than willing and so is the Congress. He will forgive me for suggesting that his reply leaves on one the impression that he does not want a settlement. If he wants one, why not accept the Congress President's offer that Congress and League representatives should put their heads together and never part until they have reached a settlement. Is there any flaw or want of sincerity in this offer?

Sevagram, 20-7-'42

TO MY CRITICS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The critics who impute motives to the Working Committee or to me harm the cause they profess to serve. The members of the Working Committee are all seasoned servants of the nation with full sense of their responsibility. It is no use damning me as a dictator like Herr Hitler. He does not argue with his coworkers if he may be said to have any. He merely issues orders which can only be disobeyed on pain of death or worse. I argue with my friends for days. I argued at the last meeting for eight days. The members agreed when their reason was satisfied. My sanction with my friends as well as self-styled enemies has ever been reason and love. It is a travesty of truth therefore to compare me with Hitler or to call me a dictator in any current sense of the term. It is an equal travesty of truth to abuse the Congress by calling it a Hindu or communal organisation. It is national in the fullest sense of the term. It is a purely political organisation with which can undoubtedly be compared the Liberal Party which is without the slightest communal taint. Unfortunately today although it has politicians who have a record of distinguished service, it has admittedly little or no following in the country by reason of its members holding unpopular views. Thus the Congress remains the sole representative national organisation in India with a mass following. Its gains belong not merely to itself but to the whole nation, irrespective of caste or creed or race. It is mischievous and misleading to discredit this organisation in America and Great Britain as a communal or pro-Axis or a purely Hindu organisation. If it was a pro-Axis organisation, it has courage and influence enough to make a public declaration to that effect in disregard of the consequences that might overtake it. It is not, and has never been, a secret or a violent organisation. If it had been either, it would have been suppressed long ago.

So much about some manifest misrepresentations.

Now about suppression of relevant Congress position.

Nobody has contended that the demand for withdrawal of British Power is not an inherent

right of the nation, irrespective of the demand to the contrary by those who by centuries of habit have lost the sense of freedom. It is said that it is wrong not intrinsically, but because of the Congress declaration of non-embarrassment to ask for such withdrawal at this moment.

The critics conveniently omit to mention the fact that in order to prove its bona fides and to prevent the Japanese attack the Congress has agreed that, in spite of the withdrawal of the British, the Allied troops should remain in India, naturally under a treaty with the Free India Government to be. So long as that Government, provisional or otherwise, has not come into being, there will be no authority to check their operations save their honour. For by declaring India free they will have absolved themselves from consulting anybody formally as they have to consult today members of their nomination. In this sense the declaration of Independence leaves them free to adopt the military measures they may consider necessary. I know that this is an anomalous position for a free country to be in. But honesty dictates the course. As I have said and repeat here the Congress demand is fool-proof. Critics who are anxious to serve the Allies would do well to examine the Congress position and point out flaws, if there are any. Let me inform them that those who have come to me to understand my demand and who had serious misgivings went away convinced that it was wholly just and that if justice was not done the Congress would be right in taking action to vindicate its position.

Sevagram, 19-7-'42

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Village Swaraj

Q. In view of the situation that may arise at any moment in India, would you give an outline or skeleton of a Village Swaraj Committee, which could function in all village matters in the absence of, and without relying upon an over-head Government or other organisation? In particular, how would you ensure that the Committee should be fully representative and that it would act impartially, efficiently and without favour or fear? What should be the scope of authority and the machinery to enforce its commands? And what should be the manner in which a committee or an individual member of it could be removed for corruption, inefficiency or other unfitness?

A. My idea of village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus every village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle, recreation and playground for adults and children. Then if there is more land available, it will grow useful money crops, thus excluding ganja, tobacco, opium and the like. The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its

own waterworks ensuring clean water supply. This can be done through controlled wells or tanks. Education will be compulsory up to the final basic course. As far as possible every activity will be conducted on the cooperative basis. There will be no castes such as we have today with their graded untouchability. Non-violence with its technique of Satyagraha and non-cooperation will be the sanction of the village community. There will be a compulsory service of village guards who will be selected by rotation from the register maintained by the village. The Government of the village will be conducted by the Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualifications. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required. Since there will be no system of punishments in the accepted sense, this Panchayat will be the legislature, judiciary and executive combined to operate for its year of office. Any village can become such a republic today without much interference, even from the present Government whose sole effective connection with the villages is the exaction of the village revenue. I have not examined here the question of relations with the neighbouring villages and the centre if any. My purpose is to present an outline of village government. Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own government. The law of non-violence rules him and his government. He and his village are able to defy the might of a world. For the law governing every villager is that he will suffer death in the defence of his and his village's honour.

The reader may well ask me, as I am asking myself while penning these lines, as to why I have not been able to model Sevagram after the picture here drawn. My answer is, I am making the attempt. I can see dim traces of success though I can show nothing visible. But there is nothing inherently impossible in the picture drawn here. To model such a village may be the work of a lifetime. Any lover of true democracy and village life can take up a village, treat it as his world and sole work, and he will find good results. He begins by being the village scavenger, spinner, watchman, medicine man and school-master all at once. If nobody comes near him, he will be satisfied with scavenging and spinning.

Sevagram, 18-7-'42

Honourable Means of Dying

Q. Will you please explain more fully your dictum that "a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying"? Do you endorse suicide in such cases? Or do you suggest that mere intense will to die will result in death?

A. I would not rule out suicide in such cases as a means of escape from torture—not for the pain of it, but for showing the tyrant that his torture would not bend the suicide. Tyrants have prevented suicide for the purpose of the pleasure tortures give them. But I do not regard suicide as necessarily

an honourable means of dying. Of course, the most honourable means would be the intense longing to die, so intense as to induce death for the mere will. But this is given to one in a billion. What I had in mind when I wrote the paragraph was a variety of struggles of the prisoners with the warders in which resistance though non-violent must end in death. Thus supposing that A compels B to crawl on his belly, resistance can be carried to the breaking point. Every form of such resistance unto death I would count as honourable. This resistance can be offered by the weakest as well as the strongest—by the weakest perhaps more effectively, certainly more expeditiously. The indispensable condition is the possession of a stout heart and an iron will. I am not writing theory. My opinion is based on personal experience and that of others who have been under my observation. A very weak woman could not be bent under the cruel will of her imperious husband. Youngsters frail in body have successfully defied the orders of hard schoolmasters or heartless parents. The crux of the question is whether there is real readiness, nay will to die. The will will most assuredly point the way.

Ineffective Sympathy

Q. Why should not the Congress declare that as long as India is herself in bondage, she can be neither a friend nor an enemy of any country? What is the value of her sympathies with China, Russia etc., when she has no freedom to assist them in her own way? Has Russia thought of India?

A. You are right. India's sympathy can give no effective help as her enmity can do no harm to any person or nation so long as India is herself not free. Nevertheless Pandit Jawaharlal with his international outlook and generosity has accustomed us to express our sympathy to nations in distress without expectation of like return. We lose nothing by expressing sympathy even though we realise that it can cut no ice. If Russia has no thought of India today, in the long run she is bound to recognise the utterly unselfish character of our sympathy. It should not be forgotten that sympathy without ability to render effective help has its own moral value. We receive with appreciation sympathy from those who we know are unable to render us effective help in our struggle.

Your question is itself an additional justification for our demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British power. Having learnt to show sympathy to nations in distress the knowledge of our helplessness and the knowledge that if we are free we can render much effective help makes us or should make us specially anxious and oblige us to realise our ambition even during the war.

Sevagram, 10-7-'42

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HARIJANS AND SAVARNAS

I have received several letters regarding my note in the *Harijan* with respect to the Vile Parle Crematorium, correcting one or two of my statements and asking me to state Gandhiji's views on two or three concrete questions. I do so without delay.

The crematorium is being used for several years by Harijans, and the exclusion of Harijans from the use thereof by locking it by a certain individual was wrong.

My note would leave no one in doubt about the indefeasible right of the Harijans to use the crematorium, and the Harijan and Congress workers who are helping them to use it are simply fulfilling a sacred duty. No Satyagraha is involved in this, for the simple reason that there is no order or law that is being disobeyed. That there is a case pending in this connection is beside the point. Therefore no office-bearer of the Harijan Sevak Sangh or of the Congress Committees concerned may shirk his duty in this behalf on the ground that there is no resolution of the Congress or the Harijan Sevak Sangh in this behalf. A resolution for starting Satyagraha would be necessary when the Magistrate gives a decision in favour of the complainant.

I have therefore no hesitation in saying that Gandhiji would regard indifference or neglect in this behalf by Hindu office-bearers of the Congress Committees and by the office-bearers of the Harijan Sevak Sangh concerned as a dereliction of duty. I know that individual workers are helping the Harijans and thus fulfilling an obvious duty that Savarnas owe to the Harijans. But those responsible must not stay aside.

* * *

There is no limit to the mercilessness to which irreligion masking as religion will go. The Civil Surgeon here was telling me of a pathetic case he noticed when he was on tour last week. There is cholera in this district, and he found during his inspection that in a Harijan's house five members had already died of cholera. They were all drinking contaminated water from the river, because the Savarnas would not let them use the village well which had been disinfected. The Civil Surgeon, who is a Hindu, with another responsible official, took the heartless Savarnas to task, and invited the Harijans to go and draw water from the well in their presence. This they did and it is hoped that the Harijans will now be allowed to use the well without let or hindrance. But one is painfully astonished that people who can be so heartless have the hardihood to call themselves Hindus.

Sevagram, 18-7-'42

M. D.

By R. B. Gregg

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HARIJAN

July 26

1942

TO EVERY JAPANESE

I must confess at the outset that though I have no ill will against you, I intensely dislike your attack upon China. From your lofty height you have descended to imperial ambition. You will fail to realise that ambition and may become the authors of the dismemberment of Asia, thus unwittingly preventing World Federation and brotherhood without which there can be no hope for humanity.

Ever since I was a lad of eighteen studying in London over fifty years ago, I learnt, through the writings of the late Sir Edwin Arnold, to prize the many excellent qualities of your nation. I was thrilled when in South Africa I learnt of your brilliant victory over Russian arms. After my return to India from South Africa in 1915, I came in close touch with Japanese monks who lived as members of our Ashram from time to time. One of them became a valuable member of the Ashram in Sevagram, and his application to duty, his dignified bearing, his unflinching devotion to daily worship, affability, unruffledness under varying circumstances, and his natural smile which was positive evidence of his inner peace had endeared him to all of us. And now that owing to your declaration of war against Great Britain he has been taken away from us, we miss him as a dear co-worker. He has left behind him as a memory his daily prayer and his little drum, to the accompaniment of which we open our morning and evening prayers.

In the background of these pleasant recollections I grieve deeply as I contemplate what appears to me to be your unprovoked attack against China and, if reports are to be believed, your merciless devastation of that great and ancient land.

It was a worthy ambition of yours to take equal rank with the great Powers of the world. Your aggression against China and your alliance with the Axis Powers was surely an unwarranted excess of that ambition.

I should have thought that you would be proud of the fact that that great and ancient people, whose old classical literature you have adopted as your own, are your neighbours. Your understanding of one another's history, tradition, literature should bind you as friends rather than make you the enemies you are today.

If I was a free man, and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, may be my life, to come to your country to plead with you to desist from the wrong you are doing to China and the world and therefore to yourself.

But I enjoy no such freedom. And we are in the unique position of having to resist an imperialism that we detest no less than yours and Nazism. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.

But in this they need no aid from foreign Powers. You have been gravely misinformed, as I know you are, that we have chosen this particular moment to embarrass the Allies when your attack against India is imminent. If we wanted to turn Britain's difficulty into our opportunity we should have done it as soon as the War broke out nearly three years ago.

Our movement demanding the withdrawal of the British Power from India should in no way be misunderstood. In fact if we are to believe your reported anxiety for the Independence of India, a recognition of that Independence by Britain, should leave you no excuse for any attack on India. Moreover the reported profession sorts ill with your ruthless aggression against China.

I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British Imperialism, German Nazism, or your pattern. If we do not, we shall have been ignoble spectators of the militarisation of the world in spite of our belief that in non-violence we have the only solvent of the militarist spirit and ambition. Personally I fear that without declaring the Independence of India the Allied Powers will not be able to beat the Axis combination which has raised violence to the dignity of a religion. The Allies cannot beat you and your partners unless they beat you in your ruthless and skilled warfare. If they copy it their declaration that they will save the world for democracy and individual freedom must come to naught. I feel that they can only gain strength to avoid copying your ruthlessness by declaring and recognising now the freedom of India, and turning sullen India's forced cooperation into freed India's voluntary cooperation.

To Britain and the Allies we have appealed in the name of justice, in proof of their professions, and in their own self-interest. To you I appeal in the name of humanity. It is a marvel to me that you do not see that ruthless warfare is nobody's monopoly. If not the Allies some other Power will certainly improve upon your method and beat you with your own weapon. Even if you win you will leave no legacy to your people of which they would feel proud. They cannot take pride in a recital of cruel deeds however skillfully achieved.

Even if you win it will not prove that you were in the right, it will only prove that your power of

destruction was greater. This applies obviously to the Allies too, unless they perform *now* the just and righteous act of freeing India as an earnest and promise of similarly freeing all other subject peoples in Asia and Africa.

Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of Free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster. I address this appeal to you in the hope that our movement may even influence you and your partners in the right direction and deflect you and them from the course which is bound to end in your moral ruin and the reduction of human beings to robots.

The hope of your response to my appeal is much fainter than that of response from Britain. I know that the British are not devoid of a sense of justice and they know me. I do not know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to the sword. How I wish that you are cruelly misrepresented and that I shall touch the right chord in your heart! Any way I have an undying faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India, and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you. Sevagram, 18-7-'42

I am

Your friend and well-wisher
M. K. Gandhi

WITH THREE PRESS CORRESPONDENTS

Three press correspondents stayed after the Working Committee in order to have a leisurely interview with Gandhiji for a full clarification of certain questions. They had already been present at the general press interview the day before, but they thought their countries would be specially interested in certain questions, and they tried to represent the mind of the average man in their respective countries. Mr. Steele represented the *Chicago Daily News*, Mr. Stuart Emeny the *News Chronicle*, and Mr. Richard Jen the *Central News Agency of China*.

The Programme

Mr. Emeny was full of doubts and fears—at any rate he represented the doubts and fear of the average Englishman. "Could you give me an idea of the plans of your movement? Would it include breach of the Salt Laws, calling out Government servants and labour?"

Gandhiji made a full reply to the question: "As I said yesterday the programme covers every activity of a strictly non-violent character included in a mass movement. Therefore undoubtedly the things you have mentioned are included. But it is not my intention to undertake at once any over-whelming programme. I want to watch and see, because whatever may be said to the contrary, even in

conducting the movement I want to guard against a sudden outburst of anarchy or a state of things which may be calculated to invite Japanese aggression. I believe that India's demand is fundamental, it is indispensable for national existence as I conceive it to be. Therefore I shall take every precaution I can to handle the movement gently, but I would not hesitate to go to the extremest limit, if I find that no impression is produced on the British Government or the Allied Powers. I hold it to be legitimate to make the Allied Powers responsible for all that may happen in India, because it is open to them in the interests of the common cause to prevent the happening of anything that might disturb the even course of the war. I think I have sufficiently answered your very pertinent question. I am unable to give you a more detailed answer, not because I want to suppress or shirk it, but I am not ready with a planned programme as yet."

"It will be your biggest movement?"

"Yes, my biggest movement."

Time Limit?

"But if there is no response," asked Mr. Emeny, "what time limit would you set before launching your campaign?"

"Assuming that the A. I. C. C. confirms the resolution, there will be some time—but not very long—taken. As far as I can see just now it may be a week or two."

"But you will give time?"

"Of course—as I have always done before launching on every struggle."

"If the Viceroy asks you to go to Delhi, will you accept his invitation?"

"Oh, yes. And then you forget that the Viceroy and I have become personal friends, if a public man and a Viceroy may be so called."

Knowing what the Government has always done Mr. Emeny put a plain blunt question: "Will your campaign collapse if Government sent you and thousands of your followers to jail?"

"I hope not," said Gandhiji laughing heartily, "on the contrary it should gain strength if it has any vitality."

Why not a Truce?

And now Mr. Emeny pleaded, "With the enemy at the gates, what is your objection to calling a truce?"

"This struggle has been conceived", said Gandhiji, "in order to avert a catastrophe. At the critical moment an un-free India is likely to become a hindrance rather than a help. The Congress resolution itself hints at the possibility of a large number of Indians going over to the Japanese side—if they effected a landing on the Indian shores—as we now know happened in Burma, Malay and for aught I know Singapore too. I am of the opinion that this might have been prevented at least so far as Burma is concerned, if she had been made independent. But it was not done. We know the result. We are determined so far as it is humanly possible to secure our Independence, so that no Indian worth the name would then think of going over to the Japanese side. It would then become as much

India's interest, as the Allies' interest, to resist Japanese aggression with all her might."

Moral Duty

"But with time so short don't you think you have a moral duty to stand beside the Russians and the Chinese?" was Mr. Emeny's next question. If Gandhiji was keen on winning a dialectical advantage over his questioner, he might simply have said, "whose moral duty is greater — that of the Allies to make India Free or that of an un-free India to help the Allies?" But, no. He calmly replied: "Don't you see if it was a purely personal question, what you say would have been perfectly possible. But even with the combined influence of every member of the Working Committee, it would have been impossible to enthuse the masses in favour of the Allied cause, which they do not understand, cannot understand."

"But," said Mr. Emeny. "I have the feeling myself that you could, if you would, with your tremendous authority with the masses, do anything. They are sure to listen to you."

"You credit me with an influence which I wish I had, but I assure you, I do not possess. And in proof of this I shall give you two solid facts. If I had that influence you will agree that we would already have won our Independence without causing any trouble to anybody. But, as you know, I have no influence, nor has the Working Committee with the Muslim League and the Princes. That is one solid fact. Then, there is another thing. During the last war as you perhaps know, I had thrown myself heart and soul into it. I had become a voluntary recruiting agent for the British. And I began my agency in the district in which I had just been leading a campaign for agricultural relief with fair success. I should have made great headway there. But I tell you I did not do so. I used to walk miles in the hot burning sun in order to collect recruits and to make an impression on the people about the urgency of it. But I could not. You will see, therefore, that my influence great as it may appear to outsiders, is strictly limited. I may have considerable influence to conduct a campaign for redress of popular grievances because people are ready and need a helper. But I have no influence to direct people's energy in a channel in which they have no interest."

"Then, what part of the people, you think, will believe in your movement?" put in Mr. Steele.

"I wish I could tell you definitely. It is all problematical. I simply trade on the absolute purity of the cause and the equal purity of the means which are non-violent."

American Opinion May Be Antagonised

"Are you not apprehensive," added Mr. Steele, that the Working Committee's resolution will antagonise American opinion?"

"Of course it may. But I have never embarked upon any campaign in the belief that I would have world sympathy at my back. On the contrary, the odds, almost in every case, have been against me. And in the very first Satyagraha struggle which started in South Africa, every outward element was

hostile to me. I had stated then — though I had no experience of the working of Satyagraha that I have now — that a handful though we were in the midst of millions who had no sympathy for us, we had to rely upon our own inner strength and the absolute justice of our cause. And that sustained us through the long-drawn-out agony lasting eight years. I do not know why I should lose the sympathy of the American people, or the British people, for that matter. And why should they fight shy of a just demand for absolute freedom?"

"Speaking as an American," said Mr. Steele, "I can say that the reaction of many Americans would be that a movement for freedom may be unwise at this moment for it would lead to complications in India which may be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war."

"This belief is born of ignorance," replied Gandhiji. "What possible internal complication can take place if the British Government declare to-day that India is absolutely independent? It would be in my opinion the least risk the Allies could take on behalf of the war effort. I am open to conviction. If anybody could convince me that in the midst of war, the British Government cannot declare India free without jeopardizing the war effort, I should like to hear the argument. I have not as yet heard any cogent one."

Open to Conviction

"If you were convinced, would you call off the campaign?"

"Of course. My complaint is that all these good critics talk at me, swear at me, but never condescend to talk to me."

China

The Chinese friend now took his turn. He said, "You have implicit faith in non-violence. But we have seen that armed resistance alone can succeed against the Japanese?"

"China never tried any experiment in non-violence. That the Chinese remained passive for some time is no proof that it was a non-violent attitude. For the first time in history non-violence instead of being confined to individuals, religious enthusiasts and mystics, has been brought down to the political field and been experimented on by vast masses of mankind. Just imagine, that instead of a few Indians, or even a million or so, all 400,000,000 Indians were non-violent, would Japan make any headway in India, unless they were intent upon exterminating all the four hundred million?"

"If India were made of four hundred million Gandhis —" interrupted Mr. Steele.

"Here," said Gandhiji, "we come to brass tacks. That means India is not sufficiently non-violent. If we had been, there would have been no parties, and there would be no Japanese attack. I know non-violence is limited in both numbers and quality, but deficient as it is in both these respects, it has made a great impression and infused life into the people which was absent before. The awakening that showed itself on April 6, 1919, was a matter of surprise to every Indian. I cannot today account for the response we then had from every nook and corner of the country where no public worker had

ever been. We had not then gone among the masses, we did not know we could go and speak to them."

"What can Free India do for China?" was Mr. Jen's question.

"If India were to listen to me, she would give non-violent help to China. But I know that will not be. Free India would want to be militarist. She will then get all the materials and men she needs—although it appears that China with her vast populations will not need men. Today unfree India cannot send a single person to China. I go further—Free India can even plead with Japan and Japan will have to listen."

Provisional Government

"Can you give me an idea who would take the lead in forming a Provisional Government—you, Congress, or the Muslim League?"

"The Muslim League certainly can; the Congress can. If everything went right, it would be a combined leadership. No one party would take the lead."

"Would it be within the present constitutional structure?"

"The constitution will be dead" said Gandhiji. "The Government of India Act of 1935 is dead. The I. C. S. would have to go and it might be anarchy but there *need* be no anarchy, if the British withdraw with goodwill. *Free India Government* would set up a constitution suited to Indian genius, evolved without dictation from outside. But whether India would be cut up into autonomous provinces or not, I do not know. The permanent structure may take time—all the time the war may require. But the Provisional Government may continue to function. It may be somewhat after the pattern of the present government, but with great modifications. The two communities will certainly work in hearty combination. It would be a combination not superimposed, but brought about by internal effort. The dictating factor will not be an outside one, but wisdom. And I believe there will be abundant wisdom among us."

"Would the Viceroy cease to exist as such?"

"We shall be friends *even* then, but on a par, and I have no doubt that Lord Linlithgow will welcome the day when he will be one of the people."

Why Not Today?

"Why can't all this be done today, without the British withdrawal," said Mr. Emeny returning to the charge.

"The answer is simple. Why can't a prisoner do a thing which a free man can do? You may not have been behind prison bars, but I have been and I know. Imprisonment means civil death, and I suggest to you that the whole of India is civilly dead. The very breath is controlled by British power. Then there is another experience that you lack. You have not been a member of a nation that has been under subjection for several centuries. Our *habit* has been that we can never be free. You know the case of Shri Subhas Bose, a man of great self-sacrifice who might have had a distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service, but who is now an exile because he cannot possibly tolerate this helpless condition and feels that he must seek the help of Germany and Japan."

"You have said there is no more room for negotiation. Does it mean that you would ignore any conciliatory gesture if it was made?" was the final question put on behalf of all the three.

Negotiations?

"So far as we are concerned, we have closed our hearts. As we have said in our resolution all hopes have been dashed to pieces. The burden is shifted. But it is open to America, to Britain, to China and even to Russia to plead for India which is pining for freedom. And if an acceptable proposal is made, it would certainly be open to the Congress or any other party to entertain and accept it. It would be churlish on our part if we said 'we don't want to talk to anybody and we will by our own strong hearts expel the British.' Then the Congress Committee won't be meeting; there would be no resolutions; and I should not be seeing press representatives."

Sevagram, 16-7-42

M. D.

THE MILLSTONE

Some time ago Sir Stafford Cripps wrote that it was not possible for him to read the history of the British Empire without a sense of shame. But Mr. Amery has declared that the British have "every right to be proud of what we have done in India. We have every right to be even more proud of what we are attempting to do in India." (Foreword to the volume of his speeches.)

Mr. Edgar Snow in his latest book *The Battle for Asia* has casually examined this claim, in trying to show what a losing political battle the so-called democracies are fighting. India he calls "an enormous millstone round the neck of oriental emancipation and the progress of the whole world," and says:

"Americans may not realise that British India is a generation older than the United States. After 180 years of British rule, 93 per cent of the Indian population is still illiterate. In 40 years of American rule in the Philippines illiteracy was cut down from 98 per cent to 45 per cent, while in 20 years the Soviet Union reduced illiteracy from 78 per cent to 8 per cent. In the Soviet Union in a single year (1937) there were 45,900 graduates of industrial and agricultural schools. In India, with twice Russia's population, 960 engineers were graduated. India has generous reserves of coal, but produces only about one-sixth as much as Russia and even less than China. Although India has the third largest iron reserves in the world (surpassed only by the United States and France) her production of steel increased in ten years only to 879,000 tons where it stood in 1935. In the same period in the Soviet Union steel production rose from a million and a half tons to 16 million tons. Little Japan, one-seventh the size of India and with extremely meagre iron resources, produced seven times as much steel. India's water-power resources are second only to those of the United States, yet she has developed only 3 per cent of them as against the latter's roughly 40 per cent. Russia increased her electric power output in 20 years from 1900 million kilowatt hours to 36,500 million in 1937, when India's output stood at 2500 million hours,

"...India suffers from the double incubus of British imperialism buttressed by a string of 563 feudal princes fastened upon masses of men who live in a social darkness unimaginable to a western mind. The princes' territories covering a third of the nation's 1,800,000 square miles, constitute the social waste lands of the East, the regions of "permanent decay". Purely parasitic the princes contribute nothing to Indian society but oppression for the people and glamour for the tourist, while they exact astounding tributes for their personal amusement and luxury. The King of England receives from Parliament a bounty of about one in 1600 from the taxation of his subjects. Some of the Indian princes collect as high as one in two; the least backward (the Maharani of Travancore) gets one in 17. The Prince of Bikaner retained from his annual budget 2,24,000 rupees or more than he spent on education for all his subjects. The royal family, the royal weddings, the royal palaces and the royal retainers absorbed two-thirds of Bikaner's entire budget. Contrasts between the vast wealth and plunder of the richest princes and the British officials and merchants with the poverty and degradation of the Indian people is the measure of the inadequacy of 180 years of rule by the British Raj."

This is a bare statement of non-controversial facts, not made with a view to a study of India, but in order to demonstrate "Britain's political weakness in India", "otherwise there should be no necessity for American aid to hold her position in Asia. India is a nation of nearly 400 millions, with a war potential far richer than Japan and China combined. If the British are unable to defend India and its frontiers at Singapore and Burma without American help it is a significant commentary."

The book was written before America's entry into war, and so then the author wrote, "It is not America's business to decide the destiny of India or any other British colonies." But he added, "It may become inescapably our business if we identify our own fate with that of the British colonial empire." But he was not oblivious of the fact that "democracy in England in particular needs to reinforce itself with something no less than a new charter of human liberty, a new declaration of the rights of man. . . . Britain and the Dominions need to proclaim a programme of emancipation of the colonies as the basis of a world commonwealth of democracies. . . . It will be suggested that the emancipation of India would mean the end of British 'unity'. It may be the only way in fact to create it. The strongest allies democratic England has today are Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and without the help of a certain former colony south of Canada she might not survive at all. A free India could become as valuable an asset to England as a free America. As a matter of fact India is so crucial in the whole imperialist structure that once it were liberated the rest of Britain's colonial problem would be simple to solve."

Mr. Snow proceeds further to point out that it is easy for Britain to throw away this millstone round her neck:

"India's population constitutes four-fifths of the overseas population of the Empire, and nearly nine-tenths of Britain's subject colonial population. Two-thirds of the British capital investment in the colonies, or 438 million pounds, is in India; but on the other hand this is only 12 per cent of the total British capital invested abroad. The colonial empire means little to the British people as a whole. What does it mean to the British investors? The whole thing brings them an income of about 38 million pounds a year, which is less than one-fifth of the total overseas investment income, and less than one-hundredth of Britain's total national income. India's importance in Britain's trade is also often exaggerated. Nine-tenths of Britain's production is sold at home and more than half of the tenth which goes abroad is sold outside the Empire. India takes only about two per cent. Jobs? All the imperial colonies combined employ at most less than half of one per cent of the British population and nearly all belong to the upper-bracket income group which constitute but five per cent of Britain's people. Thus if Britain lost India altogether it would mean the sacrifice of only about four pounds per capita in her national investment income and a two per cent reduction in her total market. The loss in income would in fact be felt by a small group of Britain's monopoly capitalists. Such an item is infinitesimal compared to the terrific levy now being exacted by war and what is yet to be paid in the future."

As against that slight material loss, put the tremendous moral and political gain. Mr. Snow does not use the terms "justice" and "equity". He simply says: "A dynamic strategy is the first political necessity." The Axis powers are making capital of the present anomaly. Britain is fighting, they say, in order to keep her ill-gotten gains, and America is bolstering her up. But when the democracies, says Mr. Snow, "have divested themselves of hypocrisy, they would have seized the initiative in vitalizing men's minds with a new promise and hope, in its period unassailable from any new quarter. The democracies would win not only the war but the peace." "Britain offers her allies behind enemy lines little to fight for, and in this transitional world, it is not enough to have something to fight against."

All this, as I said, was written before America threw herself on the side of Britain. It is all the more imperative now for America to help herself and Britain to throw off the hypocrisy. "The world is today divided between 'ruler' peoples fighting each other for control of subject peoples", sums up Mr. Snow, "and there is no peace until subject peoples become free." Slave India is a millstone dragging Britain down, and may make victory impossible. Free India means the emancipation of all, including Britain. There cannot be a better case for the immediate emancipation of India.

Sevagan, 13-7-42

M. D.

CASUAL NOTES

American Propaganda

The New York *Sun* informed America that the latest expansion of the Viceroy's Council had a hearty reception in India, and a sobering effect on the extremists, Gandhiji having even agreed to the stationing of the Allied troops! Well, Gandhiji had expressed his view about the stationing of the Allied troops at least two weeks before the announcement of the expansion.

Now comes the American *Life*, said to have a circulation of three million, giving numerous photographs of the Generalissimo's meeting with Gandhiji, with mischievous comments under them. "Chiang Kai Shek", it says "is the fighting leader of Free China. Mohandas Gandhi is the 'talking leader of subject India.' How wretchedly unimportant from the point of view of war purposes India is, *Life* proceeds to point out in this picturesque way: "Actually India ceased being productively important about a century ago when the machine made its handicraft economically obsolete. In electric energy—the modern world's guage of industrial power—India is about on a par with the State of South Carolina. Skipped by the industrial revolution, its 390,000,000 people have been largely reduced to the meanest level of agricultural subsistence." (What a proud record that for British rule!) Further: "Only about 1 per cent of this population is really represented by the Hindu leaders. Most of the rest of India do not know the name of Nehru, perhaps not even the name of Gandhi." And yet foolish America clamours for the help of the "talking" leader Gandhi, and Nehru, and of a subject and productively unimportant India!

But I must pick out a few more gems. "These are the people who will presently meet the Jap, unless Chiang Kai Shek's troops under American General Stilwell can stop that common enemy in Burma." (Alas, this was written in April.) Again: "The two contrary ways of meeting destiny have probably never been better symbolized than by the two men above. Gandhi has decided to leave India the football of destiny. Chiang long ago decided that China would and could make its destiny." A correcter way to describe "the two contrary ways" would have been to say that Gandhi would let India decide her own destiny, China would have her destiny decided by benevolent helpers like America and Britain.

Still more gems: "At first, Gandhi refused to meet the Chiangs at New Delhi, on the ground that he was their host and by Chinese custom they must come to him at Calcutta. The Chiangs obligingly went to Calcutta." An insult, as Indian readers well know, at one stroke, both to Gandhiji and the Generalissimo. Gandhiji, in spite of his poor following, is described as "the chief obstacle to Britain's plan for India," and Nehru "leader of India's dominant Congress party, is described under one photograph as working with Madame Chiang, "on details of India's war effort." There is also a libellous reference to Birla as "Gandhiji's backer,

a man willing to do business with anybody", and a parting kick at Gandhiji, where Birla's money is described as coming from the manufactured cotton goods that Gandhi crusades against."

But that is American 'Life'!

Unworthy of Their Salt

How some ex-satraps, who are still enjoying fat pensions from India's treasury for "services" rendered to India, are continuing to do those "services" may be judged from pronouncements by two of these. In a lecture on conditions in Orissa delivered before the East India Association in London, Sir John Hubback, is reported (*Times of India*, July 13) to have said that "the unrest which had resulted in the outrage"—Major Bazalgette's murder—"had without question been organised by the Congress party's 'High Command,' as part of their campaign to compel the Rulers of all States to agree to the election of State representatives to the Federal Legislature with a view to securing Congress domination at the centre." Apart from the several lies that he has packed in one sentence, Sir John is guilty of a libel, against the Working Committee of the Congress, which the Government of India ought, in fairness, ask him to withdraw. The agitation was the result not of Congress propaganda but of the gross misrule in the small states that even officials including the Viceroy had condemned, the agitation was kept under control by the Congress, and the outrage was condemned in unmeasured terms by every responsible man in the Congress. If the Congress High Command were in any way responsible, why was Sir John Hubback silent over the incident so long? Sir John vainly talks of the Federation scheme which the Congress had all along boycotted and has not a word to say about the brutal shooting down of hundreds of unarmed men and women in Dhenkanal, Talcher, Ranpur and Gangpur.

Now comes a libel against Gandhiji by Sir Henry Lawrence, who acted as Governor of Bombay for a little while. Gandhiji can be libelled with impunity, for his non-violence will not let him go to the law courts. This is what Sir Henry wrote to *The Spectator* (London):

"Sir,—Mr. Gandhi's views on Civil War in India may shock some of your readers, but he has made no secret of his hostility to the Moslems for many years.

"Last summer his private secretary, M. Desai, published a life of the present President of the National Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (with a foreword by Mr. Gandhi). Writing of Hindus and Moslems Mr. Gandhi is quoted as saying 'if it is to be our lot that we must shed each other's blood, then I say that the sooner we do so the better it is for us.'"

Sir Henry must have ample evidence of Gandhiji's "hostility to the Moslems for many years", but he produces none in this poisonous letter, beyond the sentence he has quoted in it. Let us see what a wilfully vicious distortion it is. It is wrenched out of a context that I must indicate in brief and give the whole quotation. The extract is from a chapter

in my book entitled 'The Turn of the Tide', describing the worsening of the Hindu-Muslim situation, followed by Gandhiji's 21 days' fast, the Unity Conference in Delhi and so on. Then these two paragraphs follow:

"But neither the fast nor the resolutions of the Unity Conference solved the problem of Hindu-Muslim Unity. The Conference was attended by most of the prominent leaders, but they had not come as representatives of their communities, and none had the strength to get the warring groups to listen to them or act upon the resolutions. Almost immediately after the Fast riots broke out in Jubbulpore and Allahabad. In 1925 the sad tale was repeated at various places in the country, so much so that in May of that year Gandhiji had to declare at a public meeting in sheer exasperation and almost in desperation:

"I have admitted my incompetence. I have admitted that I have been found wanting as a physician prescribing a cure for this malady. I do not find that either Hindus or Muslims are ready to accept my cure, and therefore I simply nowadays confine myself to a passing mention of this problem and content myself by saying that some day or other we Hindus and Muslims will have to come together, if we want the deliverance of our country. And if it is to be our lot that, before we can come together, we must shed one another's blood, then I say the sooner we do so, the better it is for us. If we propose to break one another's heads, let us do so in a manly way."

"This situation, even fifteen years since that pathetic declaration, is just the same, perhaps worse. But among those who hold steadfastly to the will to unite whatever happens—and that is what will ultimately count—the name of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad stands in the forefront."

But that is the British way of being worthy of the salt one has eaten!

"Criminally Irresponsible"

A correspondent in the *Nottingham Guardian* inveighs against the talk of "a generous gesture" towards India, for "unfortunately Hindu India, Moslem India, and the Princes India are three separate and antagonistic entities. None trusts the others, and it would be a criminally irresponsible act on the part of the British Government to give one power over the others." He then wisely adds:

"Mr. Churchill, with characteristic clear sightedness, has always recognised these obstinate facts. Consequently he has been called a reactionary, a die-hard and worse. If Indians themselves will not get together and agree upon a basis of self-government, in spite of endless suggestion and persuasion from the British side, then no system imposed from outside can be other than a disastrous failure."

That is exactly what we say. It is because 'we agree that any system imposed from outside would be a disastrous failure and would be "criminally irresponsible", we want the British to retire in dignity, and let the Indians do what they like with themselves.

Commonsense

That there is sturdy commonsense in certain quarters is evident from what the *South London*

Press said about Sir Stafford Cripps' visit to India. It hoped—alas vainly—"that Cripps, a personal friend of the Indian people's leaders, will offer them nothing less than complete equality with Britain," but wisely added,

"Whatever her status, it is obvious that India does not want to be invaded, nor is it likely that even pacifist Gandhi's followers would want to talk "peace" with Japan.

"As a nation with its own rulers, India could fight on the same terms as any other of our allies.

"Like any other country, she could form a war-time alliance for strategic reasons without the slightest reference to the internal politics of either ally.

"Well, to conquer nearly 400,000,000 people is not easy. And if only a proportion carried out Gandhi's non-cooperation ideas, it would be virtually impossible."

What India wants today is to be "a nation with its own rulers", and yet as the paper rightly says "whatever her status India does not want to be invaded."

"Negligent Use"

How Tommies can be free with their revolvers is evident from a recent issue of the *Ceylon Daily News* containing the report of "a case in which a member of the R. A. F., was charged with attempted murder." "Crown Counsel told the jury that the injured boy was travelling in a motor bus from Colombo to Rakwana and the accused (Gordon, Cooke) was driving in a motor lorry. The evidence indicated that the accused shouted out to the driver of the bus to stop it. The accused felt that he had been obstructed and having overtaken the bus the accused got down from his vehicle and came up to the bus which was stopped with a revolver in hand and shot at the back of the bus. The bullet penetrated the body of the bus and struck the injured boy's leg." Mercifully the bullet killed nobody. "His Lordship ordered the accused to enter into a bond with a surety to be of good behaviour for a period of one year and further ordered him to pay a sum of Rs. 50 as compensation to the injured boy."

Was the use of the revolver just "negligent use" or was it criminal use? At any rate it is something that the culprit was tried, and the case allowed to be reported.

Sevagram, 19-7-42

M. D.

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PUNDIT KACHRU EXTERNEED

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Pundit Kachru is a well known public worker attached to the States People Conference. When Shri Jainarayan Vyas went on hunger strike at Jodhpur, he was deputed by the President Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru to proceed to Jodhpur and watch events and report to me. For reasons known to the authorities and unknown to Pundit Kachru he was served with an externment order on the 5th inst., at 11.40 p. m., to depart from Jodhpur the next morning by 7-15 a. m., train. He telephoned to me for instructions and Mahadev Desai who answered the phone advised him in the first instance to obey the order and report. He is now in Wardha trying to finish his report to the point he was able to reach in Jodhpur.

Here is the order:

"From information received the Government of Jodhpur is satisfied that Dwarkanath Kachru (name) is acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order and the efficient prosecution of War.

"With a view to prevent the said Dwarkanath Kachru from so acting, the Government of Jodhpur, in exercise of its powers conferred by Rule 26 (1) (a) of the Defence of India Rules as applied to the Jodhpur State territory is pleased to order that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall remove himself from Marwar in railway train 1 up of 6-7-42 (manner) which leaves Jodhpur at 7-15 a. m. (via Marwar Junction) and further that the said Dwarkanath Kachru shall not return to Marwar for a period of one year from the date of this order.

"The Inspector General of Police, Jodhpur, is hereby directed to see that the above order is promptly carried out."

The important question arising is how long will the States regard people from outside their jurisdiction as foreigners and deal with them summarily as the Jodhpur authorities have done? And how long must they allow themselves to be treated as such? The Congress has exercised the greatest self-restraint in this matter. Its men deserve a better treatment. If the authorities have justification for their order, they should publicly state it. It is not a matter that can be forgotten. Pundit Kachru ought to be able to return unless satisfactory explanation is offered for his externment.

Sevagram, 12-7-'42

Since the foregoing was written, much is reported to have happened in Jodhpur. Fortunately the fast has satisfactorily ended. But repression is said to be going on merrily. I refrain from giving the details. I understand that the State has made a generous use of my last note for it contains certain statements crediting them with what appeared to be praiseworthy. Now I have angry letters repudiating principally the admission made by Shri Sriprakash that Balmukund Bisa's death was not due to any ill-treatment by the State. My correspondents say that Shri Sriprakash having not had much time was misled. I have asked the correspondents for proofs and if I get them I hope to submit them to the authorities, instead of publishing

them straightway. I can only hope that the favourable impression created on Shri Sriprakash will not be belied by any action of the authorities. I hope next week to deal with the simple demands of the Lok Parishad.

Sevagram, 20-7-'42

REPUDIATION

One wonders if the good men who ask us to wait for Independence which, as the *Manchester Guardian* says, "will in any case be India's within a few years," realise that that Independence will not be worth having whilst fresh commitments are being made and fresh burdens are being imposed every day on India. Sir Jeremy Raisman is now on his way to England to discuss with the War Office on the allocation, of the war expenditure incurred in India, or on behalf of India, as between India and England. All kinds of conjectures are being made as regards the questions which will form the subject-matter of the discussion. These we are told may include not only the allocation referred to above, but the disposal of the huge sterling balances which are steadily mounting up, and also the effect on India of the Lease-Lend Agreement with the United States.

Now without entering into the details of the intricacies of these problems, it should be obvious to the meanest understanding that these questions cannot be discussed in the interests of India by one who in no way represents India. We know the scandalous way in which India has been made to take over the millions of pounds of debts incurred by the East India Company for the conquest of India, and we can well imagine how a Britisher who must always think in terms of British interests will help in making the various deals in the interest of Britain and Britain alone. The object of the Military Financial settlement was to "limit India's financial liability in connection with the war to such measures as are within her financial capacity and have clearly been or will be taken for the local defence of India." But the term "local defence of India" can be made to cover a multitude of sins, according to the sweet will of the Finance Member who owes no responsibility to India. He is equally incompetent to determine the way in which the utilisation of the sterling resources will be made for the economic and financial benefit of India.

The Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry have lodged its emphatic protest against the manner in which these problems are being dealt with. But theirs is bound to be a cry in the wilderness, while the British Government can bomboodle an ignorant world into believing that the Government of India executive is predominantly Indian, and while these "Indian" members will not be able to move their little finger in protest against a procedure which is wholly detrimental to the interests of the country they are professing to serve. But the procedure adds strength to the Congress demand.

Sevagram, 20-7-'42

M. D.

FASTING IN NON-VIOLENT ACTION

(By M. K. Gandhi)

If the struggle which we are seeking to avoid with all our might has to come, and if it is to remain non-violent as it must in order to succeed, fasting is likely to play an important part in it. It has its place in the tussle with authority and with our own people in the event of wanton acts of violence and obstinate riots for instance.

There is a natural prejudice against it as part of a political struggle. It has a recognised place in religious practice. But it is considered a vulgar interpolation in politics by the ordinary politician though it has always been resorted to by prisoners in a haphazard way with more or less success. By fasting however, they have always succeeded in drawing public attention and disturbing the peace of jail authorities.

My own fasts have always, as I hold, been strictly according to the law of Satyagraha. Fellow Satyagrahis too in South Africa fasted partially or wholly. My fasts have been varied. There was the Hindu-Muslim Unity fast of 21 days in 1924 started under the late Maufana Mahomed Ali's roof in Delhi. The indeterminate fast against the MacDonald Award was taken in the Yerawada Prison in 1932. The 21 days' purificatory fast was begun in the Yerawada Prison and was finished at Lady Tharkersey's, as the Government would not take the burden of my being in the Prison in that condition. Then followed another fast in the Yerawada Prison in 1933 against the Government refusal to let me carry on anti-untouchability work through *Harijan* (issued from prison) on the same basis as facilities had been allowed me four months before. They would not yield, but they discharged me when their medical advisers thought I could not live many days if the fast was not given up. Then followed the illfated Rajkot fast in 1939. A false step taken by me thoughtlessly during that fast thwarted the brilliant result that would otherwise certainly have been achieved. In spite of all these fasts, fasting has not been accepted as a recognised part of Satyagraha. It has only been tolerated by the politicians. I have however been driven to the conclusion that fasting unto death is an integral part of Satyagraha programme, and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armoury under given circumstances. Not every one is qualified for undertaking it without a proper course of training.

I may not burden this note with an examination of the circumstances under which fasting may be resorted to and the training required for it. Non-violence in its positive aspect as benevolence (I do not use the word love as it has fallen into disrepute.) is the greatest force because of the limitless scope it affords for self-suffering without causing or intending any physical or material injury to the wrong-doer. The object always is to evoke the best in him. Self-suffering is an appeal to his better nature, as retaliation is to his baser. Fasting

under proper circumstances is such an appeal *par excellence*. If the politician does not perceive its propriety in political matters, it is because it is a novel use of this very fine weapon.

To practise non-violence in mundane matters is to know its true value. It is to bring heaven upon earth. There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no 'here' and no 'there'. As Jeans has demonstrated, the whole universe including the most distant stars, invisible even through the most powerful telescope in the world, is compressed in an atom. I hold it therefore to be wrong to limit the use of non-violence to cave dwellers and for acquiring merit for a favoured position in the other world. All virtue ceases to have use if it serves no purpose in every walk of life. I would therefore plead with the purely political-minded people to study non-violence and fasting as its extreme manifestation with sympathy and understanding.

Sevagram, 20-7-'42

If Japanese Come?

The British United Press has cabled the following questions for Gandhiji's reply. They are couched in evidently angry language. But Gandhiji had no hesitation in sending straight replies to them.

Q. 1. Whether Gandhiji is willing to see British go while Japanese on the Frontier.

A. This question should not occur to anybody who has read my writings for they contemplate Allied arms operating in India during war.

Q. 2. Whether he would urge non-cooperation with Japanese after Japanese occupation.

A. Japanese occupation is inconceivable while Allied arms are operating on the Indian soil. If Japanese inflict defeat on Allied arms and succeed in occupying India I would most decidedly advise full non-cooperation.

Q. 3. Whether he would persist in urging (non-cooperation) if Japs shot non-cooperators;

Q. 4. Whether he would rather be shot than cooperate himself.

A. To 3. & 4. Non-cooperation worth the name must invite shooting. In any case I would rather be shot than submit to Japanese or any other Power.

Sevagram, 21-7-'42

M. D.

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HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. [X, No. 27]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, JULY 19, 1942

[FIVE PICE

IF 'HARIJAN' IS SUPPRESSED

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Anxious inquiries are being made as to what I would do if *Harijan* was suppressed. Rumours are afloat that orders are on their way. I would ask inquirers not to be agitated if *Harijan* is suppressed. The paper may be suppressed. The manager has been instructed to stop the paper immediately orders are served on him. It is no part of the movement to publish *Harijan* in defiance of orders. But *Harijan* may be suppressed, its message cannot be, so long as I live. Indeed, the spirit will survive the dissolution of the body and somehow speak through the millions. For, with due apologies to Veer Saverkar and Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, I claim to represent the joint spirit of millions of Hindus and Mussalmans, and other non-Hindus who call themselves children of Hindustan. I am living, and hope to have the strength to die, for the freedom of every inhabitant of this land.

Let us see what *Harijan* is today. It is being published in English, Hindi, Urdu (2 places), Tamil, Telugu (2 places), Ooriya, Marathi, Gujarati, Kanaree (2 places). It is ready to be published in Bengali only awaiting legal permission. Applications have come from Assam, Kerala and Sindh. All but one edition have a large circulation compared to the other weeklies. I suggest that it is no small matter to suppress such a paper. The loss will be more Government's than the people's. They will incur much ill-will by suppressing a popular paper.

Let it be known too that *Harijan* is a view-paper as distinguished from a newspaper. People buy and read it not for amusement but instruction and regulating their daily conduct. They literally take their weekly lessons in non-violence. It cannot pay the authorities to deprive the people of their weekly food.

And *Harijan* is not an anti-British paper. It is pro-British from head to foot. It wishes well to the British people. It tells them in the friendliest manner where in its opinion they err.

The Anglo-Indian papers I know are Government favourites. They represent a dying Imperialism. Whether Britain wins or loses, Imperialism has to die. It is certainly of no use now to the British people whatever it may have been in the past. In that sense therefore Anglo-Indian papers are really anti-British as *Harijan* is pro-British. The former are disseminating hatred day by day by hiding the reality and bolstering Imperialism which is ruining Britain. It is in order to arrest the progress of that ruin that, frail as I am, I have put my whole

soul into a movement which, if it is designed to free India from the imperial yoke, is equally intended to contribute the mightiest war-effort in their behalf. If they suppress *Harijan* let them know what they will seek to suppress.

Let me add too that without needing any pressure from outside, I am using the greatest restraint in the choice of printing matter. Nothing is being consciously published that would give any clue to the 'enemy' as to military objectives or dispositions. Care is being exercised to avoid all exaggeration or sensational matter. Adjectives and adverbs are well-weighed before being used. And they know that I am ever ready to acknowledge errors and mend them.

Sevagram, 12-7-'42

Notes

In Case of Illness

Some one tells me that B. B. C. have been asking how I can hope to lead the impending non-violent movement if I am ill and bed-ridden. Well, the doctors have not pronounced me such. I am fatigued and they advise rest and a change to a cooler place for a fortnight. I am struggling to give myself rest. But sometimes duty, may be passion or infatuation, forbids it. But the relevant fact is that so long as the reason is unimpaired, physical illness is no bar to the conduct of a non-violent struggle. The peremptory belief in non-violent conduct is that all urge comes from God—the Unseen, even Unfelt save through unconquerable faith. Nevertheless as a seeker and experimenter I know that even physical illness, even fatigue is counted as a defect in a non-violent person. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is literally accepted by votaries of truth and non-violence. But that is said of perfect men. Alas I am far from the perfection I am aiming at.

Timely Action

Numerous inquiries have been made as to what should be done by evacuees and others who find it difficult and even impossible to comply with orders. The comprehensive instructions of the Working Committee in the matter are quite timely. The persons affected should know that these instructions are no part of the impending movement. They are necessary in every case for the very existence of the persons affected. Therefore, as the Working Committee very properly say, every precaution should be taken for obtaining relief through negotiation. Disregard of orders should be resorted to only when it becomes peremptory. Needless to say there is no room here for profiteering or exorbitant demands.

Sevagram, 12-7-'42

Congress and War Contracts

Q. Is it proper for Congressmen, especially members of Congress Committees, to accept war contracts?

A. This question should be properly addressed to the Working Committee. Personally however I think that Congressmen cannot accept war contracts.

Sevagram, 10-7-42

M. K. G.

WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTIONS

1

Resolution passed by the Working Committee at Wardha on July 14, 1942:

Events happening from day to day, and the experience that the people of India are passing through, confirm the opinion of Congressmen that British rule in India must end immediately, not merely because foreign domination, even at its best, is an evil in itself and a continuing injury to the subject people, but because India in bondage can play no effective part in defending herself and in affecting the fortunes of the war that is desolating humanity. The freedom of India is thus necessary not only in the interest of India but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of nazism, fascism, militarism and other forms of imperialism, and the aggression of one nation over another.

Ever since the outbreak of the world war, the Congress has studiously pursued a policy of non-embarrassment. Even at the risk of making its satyagraha ineffective, it deliberately gave it a symbolic character, in the hope that this policy of non-embarrassment, carried to its logical extreme, would be duly appreciated and that real power would be transferred to popular representatives, so as to enable the nation to make its fullest contribution towards the realisation of human freedom throughout the world, which is in danger of being crushed. It had also hoped that negatively nothing would be done which was calculated to tighten Britain's strangle-hold on India.

These hopes have, however, been dashed to pieces. The abortive Cripps proposals showed in the clearest possible manner that there was no change in the British Government's attitude towards India and that the British hold on India was in no way to be relaxed. In the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps, Congress representatives tried their utmost to achieve a minimum, consistent with the national demand, but to no avail. This frustration has resulted in a rapid and widespread increase of ill-will against Britain and a growing satisfaction at the success of Japanese arms. The Working Committee view this development with grave apprehension as this, unless checked, will inevitably lead to a passive acceptance of aggression. The Committee hold that all aggression must be resisted, for any submission to it must mean the degradation of the Indian people and the continuation of their subjection. The Congress is anxious to avoid the experience of Malaya, Singapore, and Burma and desires to build up resistance to any aggression on or invasion of India by the Japanese or any foreign power.

The Congress would change the present ill-will against Britain into good-will and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and peoples of the world and in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glow of freedom.

The Congress representatives have tried their utmost to bring about a solution of the communal tangle. But this has been made impossible by the presence of the foreign Power whose long record has been to pursue relentlessly the policy of divide and rule. Only after the ending of foreign domination and intervention, can the present unreality give place to reality, and the people of India, belonging to all groups and parties, face India's problems and solve them on a mutually agreed basis. The present political parties, formed chiefly with a view to attract the attention of and influence the British Power, will then probably cease to function. For the first time in India's history, realisation will come home that princes, jagirdars, zamindars, and propertied and monied classes, derive their wealth and property from the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere, to whom essentially power and authority must belong. On the withdrawal of British Rule in India, responsible men and women of the country will come together to form a Provisional Government, representative of all important sections of the people of India, which will later evolve a scheme whereby a Constituent Assembly can be convened in order to prepare a constitution for the government of India acceptable to all sections of the people. Representatives of Free India and representatives of Great Britain will confer together for the adjustment of future relations and for the cooperation of the two countries as allies in the common task of meeting aggression. It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

In making the proposal for the withdrawal of British Rule from India, the Congress has no desire whatsoever to embarrass Great Britain or the Allied Powers in their prosecution of the war, or in any way to encourage aggression on India or increased pressure on China by the Japanese or any other Power associated with the Axis group. Nor does the Congress intend to jeopardise the defensive capacity of the Allied Powers. The Congress is therefore agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off and resist Japanese or other aggression, and to protect and help China.

The proposal of withdrawal of the British Power from India was never intended to mean the physical withdrawal of all Britishers from India, and certainly not of those who would make India their home and live there as citizens and as equals with the others. If such withdrawal takes place with goodwill, it would result in establishing a stable Provisional Government in India and co-operation between this Government and the United Nations in resisting aggression and helping China.

The Congress realises that there may be risks involved in such a course. Such risks, however, have to be faced by any country in order to achieve freedom

and, more especially at the present critical juncture, in order to save the country and the larger cause of freedom the world over from far greater risks and perils.

While, therefore, the Congress is impatient to achieve the national purpose, it wishes to take no hasty step and would like to avoid, in so far as is possible, any course of action that might embarrass the United Nations. The Congress would plead with the British • Power to accept the very reasonable and just proposal herein made, not only in the interest of India but also that of Britain and of the cause of freedom to which the United Nations proclaim their adherence.

Should however this appeal fail, the Congress cannot view without the gravest apprehension the continuation of the present state of affairs, involving a progressive deterioration in the situation and weakening of India's will and power to resist aggression. The Congress will then be reluctantly compelled to utilise all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920, when it adopted Non-violence as part of its policy for the vindication of political rights and liberty. Such a widespread struggle would inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji. As the issues raised are of the most vital and far-reaching importance to the people of India as well as to the peoples of the United Nations, the Working Committee refer them to the All India Congress Committee for final decision. For this purpose the A. I. C. C. will meet in Bombay on the seventh of August, 1942.

2

Re : Evacuation and Other Orders

Whereas complaints have been received from various places regarding Government orders for evacuation of villages, lands and buildings without due notice and proper compensation, seizure and destruction of country-boats, even where life is impossible without them, requisition of cycles, motor vehicles and carts without proper compensation and without regard for the needs of the civil population;

The Working Committee deem it necessary to issue the following instructions for the guidance of the people concerned and hope that the Government will take immediate and necessary steps to remove the grievances and that the people will carry out their instructions as circumstances demand, provided that in all cases before the final decision to disobey an order or resist any measure is taken, all possible avenues of negotiation and relief through negotiation shall be thoroughly explored.

With regard to evacuation and other orders involving loss, either temporary or permanent, of landed property of any kind, full compensation should be demanded. In fixing the compensation the factors to be taken into consideration are the value of the land and the crops, the inconvenience and expense likely to be caused to the holder of the land by having to move to another place, and the difficulty and delay likely to be involved in obtaining other land where the dispossessed landholder could settle.

Wherever possible, arrangement should be made for providing other land to agriculturists where their agricultural land is acquired. Where this is impossible compensation in money should be paid.

Value of trees, water-channels, and wells etc. taken over or destroyed should be included in the compensation.

In case of temporary acquisition of agricultural land the full value of the crop plus 15% of it should be paid for each crop lost and when the occupation by Government terminates compensation should be paid for restoring the land to its previous conditions for agricultural purposes.

Where the bulk of the land of an agriculturist is acquired and the balance left over is so small that it may not be worth cultivating, the balance too should be acquired.

Houses where acquired should be fully paid for. Where the whole or bulk of the agricultural land of an agriculturist is acquired and only his house is left over, the house should also be acquired by paying full compensation if the agriculturist so desires.

Where a house is to be occupied temporarily for Government purposes fair rent should be paid and the owner compensated for the inconvenience and discomfort caused.

No one should be required to vacate his house without arrangement being made elsewhere for his residence, and full compensation should be paid for transport of the evacuee's belongings and for his maintenance for a reasonable period to enable him to find suitable occupation in his new surroundings.

Compensation should in all cases be paid promptly and on the spot by a responsible officer and not at the head-quarters of a District. In case no agreement is reached between the authorities and the evacuee regarding the amount of compensation and the matter has to be referred to a tribunal for decision, the amount of compensation proposed by the authorities should be paid forthwith and should not be withheld pending the adjudication of the claim.

There should be no interference with the use or disposal of private property except with the consent of the owner or on payment of adequate compensation.

In case of requisition of boats full compensation should be demanded and no boats should be surrendered till the question of compensation is settled. In areas surrounded by water where boats are indispensable for normal everyday life they should not be surrendered at all.

Fishermen who depend upon their boats for earning their livelihood should be compensated for loss of their employment in addition to the price of their boat.

In case of requisition of cycles, motor vehicles, carts etc. full compensation should be demanded and until the question of compensation is settled they should not be parted with.

In view of scarcity of salt and apprehended famine of it due to war conditions, facilities should be provided for collection, preparation and transport of salt on the sea-coast and in inland areas, free of duty, by individuals. People may manufacture salt for their own consumption and that of their cattle.

With regard to restrictions on organisations for self-protection, the Committee is of opinion that it is the inherent right of all to protect their own life and property and those of their neighbours and therefore all restrictions on them should be disregarded.

HARIJAN

July 19

1942

PERTINENT QUESTIONS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

1. If non-violent activity is neutralized by and cannot go along with armed violence in the same area, will there remain any scope for non-violent resistance to aggression in the event of India allowing foreign troops to remain on her soil and operate from here?

2. If the maintenance of India's freedom is allowed to be made dependent upon arms which, in the existing circumstances, will be led and controlled by Britain and America, can there be a feeling of real freedom experienced by the people of India, at any rate, during the duration of the war?

3. Whatever may be the terms of the 'treaty', if the Anglo-American military machine is allowed to operate for the 'defence' of India, can Indians play anything but a minor and subordinate role in the defence of this country?

4. Supposing the British, not from any moral motive but only to gain a political and strategical advantage for the time being, agree to a 'treaty' under which they are allowed to maintain and increase their military forces in India, how can they be dislodged afterwards if they prefer to remain in possession?

5. Is not the position postulated in the preceding question comparable to the position that would arise if, for instance, Subhas Babu made a treaty with Germany and Japan under which India would be declared 'independent' and the Axis forces would enter India to drive the British out?

6. If the Congress, as Maulana Saheb has just stated, 'considers defence as armed defence only', is there any prospect of real independence for India, in view of the fact that India simply has not got the resources 'independently' to offer effective armed resistance to a formidable aggressor? If we are to think in terms of armed defence only, can India, to mention only one thing, expect to remain independent with her 4000 miles of coast-line and no navy and ship-building industry?

7. What material aid could India send to China today, even if she were declared 'independent' by the British?

A. (1) The flaw pointed out in the first question cannot be denied. I have admitted it before now. The tolerance of Allied troops by Free India is an admission of the nation's limitations. The nation as a whole has never been and never been claimed to be non-violent. What part is cannot be said with any accuracy. And what is decisive is that India has not yet demonstrated non-violence of the strong such as would be required to withstand a powerful army of invasion. If we had developed that strength we would have acquired our freedom long ago and there would be no question of any troops being stationed in India. The novelty of the demand should not be missed. It is a demand

not for a transference of power from Great Britain to a Free India. For there is no party to which Britain would transfer such power. We lack the unity that gives strength. The demand therefore is not based on our demonstrable strength. It is a demand made upon Britain to do the right irrespective of the capacity of the party wronged to bear the consequences of Britain's right act. Will Britain restore seized property to the victim merely because the seizure was wrong? It is none of her concern to weigh whether the victim will be able to hold possession of the restored property. Hence it is that I have been obliged to make use of the word anarchy in this connection. This great moral act must give Britain moral status which should ensure victory. Whether without India Britain would have any reason to fight is a question I need not consider. If India is the stake and not British honour we should know. My demand then loses force but not justness.

Such being the case my honesty and honour require me to provide for the flaw. If to ask for the withdrawal of the Allied forces means their certain defeat, my demand must be ruled out as dishonest. Force of circumstances has given rise to the demand and also to its limitations. It must be admitted therefore that there will be little scope for non-violent resistance of aggression, with the Allied troops operating in India, as there is practically none now. For the troops are there today enjoying full mastery over us. Under my demand they will operate under the nation's terms.

2. If Britain's declaration is honest I see no reason why the presence of the troops should, in any shape or form, affect the feeling of real freedom. Did the French feel differently when during the last war the English troops were operating in France? When my master of yesterday becomes my equal and lives in my house on my terms, surely his presence cannot detract from my freedom. Nay, I may profit by his presence which I have permitted.

3. The conception in my scheme is that we do not want these troops for our defence or protection. If they left these shores we expect to manage somehow. We may put up non-violent defence. If luck favours us, the Japanese may see no reason to hold the country after the Allies have withdrawn, if they discover that they are not wanted. It is all speculation as to what can happen after withdrawal, voluntary and orderly or forced.

4. We assume their or rather British honesty. It would be not a matter of dislodging them, it is one of their fulfilling their plighted word. If they commit breach of faith, we must have strength enough non-violent or violent to enforce fulfilment.

5. Surely there is as much difference between the South Pole and the North as there is between the imagined conditions. My demand deals with the possessor; Subhas Babu will bring German troops to oust the possessor. Germany is under no obligation to deliver India from bondage. Therefore Subhas Babu's performance can only fling India from the frying pan into the fire. I hope the distinction is clear.

6. Maulana Sahab, it is well known, does not hold my view that any country can defend itself without force of arms. My demand is based on the view that it is possible to defend one's country non-violently.

7. India at present gives such indifferent and ill-conceived aid as the Allies think desirable. Free India can send men and material that China may need. India has affinities with China being part of Asia which the Allies cannot possibly possess and exploit. Who knows that Free India may not even succeed in persuading Japan to do the right by China?

Sevagram, 12-7-42

THE WARDHA INTERVIEW

Soon after the final meeting of the Working Committee on Tuesday, the 14th July, Gandhiji met the various representatives of the press—Indian and foreign—and gave them a joint interview. To take up the last question first, Gandhiji made it clear that the Working Committee had worked on his own draft, there had been a lot of give and take, and accommodation. "Of course, if the resolution had not met with my approval," he added, "it would not have been passed. Whether it wholly meets with my approval or not is a difficult question to answer. It is not humanly possible for a group of people to agree on every sentence and every word. There always is room for accommodation, but I must say that the Working Committee has been most considerate to me."

A Mass Movement

"Is it possible," asked the A. P. (America) representative, "for you to tell us the things you might do after the All India Congress Committee meets and adopts the W. C. Resolution?"

"Is not that question a little premature? Supposing the A. I. C. C. vetoes the resolution, the whole thing wears a different aspect. But you may know that it will be a mass movement of a strictly non-violent character and then you can fill in the details. It will include all that a mass movement can include."

"Will you include closing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops?"

"It will depend on the circumstances. I don't want rioting as a direct result. If inspite of all precautions rioting does take place, it cannot be helped." This question was not fully developed. It could not be, in the nature of things. The questioner meant perhaps picketing and peaceful persuasion. Gandhiji had in mind perhaps looting of cloth shops—as there has been looting of grain shops—and so on. If these things take place, they will be the direct product of the economic situation and not of the movement.

If Imprisoned?

"Will you court imprisonment?"

"I am not going to court imprisonment. The struggle does not involve courting imprisonment. It is too soft a thing. We had, no doubt, made it a business to court imprisonment up to now, but there will be no such thing this time. My intention is to make the thing as short and swift as possible."

Quick came another question: "Will you resort to fasting if sent to jail?"

"It is not my desire this time, as I have said, to court imprisonment. But if I am dragged into jail, it is difficult to say what I may do. But I can fast, as I have fasted before now, though I should try to avoid such an extreme step so far as possible."

"Do you hope that negotiations may be opened by the British Government?"

Negotiations?

"They may, but with whom they will do it I do not know. For it is not a question of placating one party or other. For it is the unconditional withdrawal of the British Power without reference to the wishes of any party that is our demand. The demand is therefore based on its justice. Of course it is possible that the British may negotiate a withdrawal. If they do, it will be a feather in their cap. Then it will cease to be a case for withdrawal. If the British see, however late, the wisdom of recognising the Independence of India, without reference to the various parties, all things are possible. But the point I want to stress is this: viz. that there is no room left for negotiations in the proposal for withdrawal. Either they recognise Independence or they don't. After that recognition many things can follow. For by that one single act the British representatives will have altered the face of the whole landscape and revived the hope of the people which has been frustrated times without number. Therefore whenever that great act is performed, on behalf of the British people, it will be a red letter day in the history of India and the world. And, as I have said, it can materially affect the fortunes of war."

"After the recognition of Free India it starts to function at once?"

"Yes, from the very next moment. For, independence will be not on paper, but in action. But your next legitimate question would be—'How will Free India function?' And because there was that knot, I said 'Leave India to God or anarchy.' But in practice what will happen is this—If withdrawal takes place in perfect good-will, the change will be effected without the slightest disturbance. People would have to come to their own without disturbance. Wise people from among the responsible sections will come together and will evolve a Provisional Government. Then there will be no anarchy, no interruption, and a crowning glory."

Shape of Things to Come

"Can you visualise the composition of the Provisional Government?"

"I do not need to do so. But I am clear that it won't be a party government. All parties—including the Congress—will automatically dissolve. They may function later and when they do they may function complementary to one another, each looking to the other in order to grow. Then, as I have said, all unreality disappears like mist before the morning sun—we don't know how, though we witness the phenomenon every day."

"But" asked two of the Indian correspondents rather impatiently, "looking to all their past record will the British have the sense to come to terms?"

"Why not? They are human beings and I have never discounted the possibility of human nature's upward growth, and no other nation had ever had to face a freedom movement based not principally but wholly on non-violence."

"But there is an apparent contradiction in your resolution," persisted the friends. "The first paragraphs recount the fact that there is no intention on the part of the British to part with power. Then suddenly you postulate such a desire on their part!"

"There is nothing inconsistent. The facts are narrated in order to justify the suddenness of the demand for withdrawal. The other paragraphs refer to possibilities. Many things may happen and they may be altogether creditable to the British."

"May not your movement hamper the efforts of the Allies in China?"

"No, since the movement is intended to make common cause with the Allies, it should not hamper the Allied effort."

"But if there is no withdrawal, then disturbances are bound to happen?"

"You see ill-will is already there. It will grow apace. Immediately the movement is started, the ill-will may be changed into good-will if the British people respond. But even if they don't respond, when people make an effort to free themselves from a foreign yoke, ill-will needs no other opening. It takes a healthy turn instead of the bad turn that it has today."

"But only last week Mr. Amery reminded us that nothing is going to be done?"

"I am very much afraid that we shall have the misfortune to listen to a repetition of that language in stronger terms if possible. But it can't change the will of a group of people who are determined to go their way."

Free India's Contribution

"You desire to have India's freedom in order to help the Allies", was Mr. Edgar Snow's question, and the last question. "Will Free India carry out total mobilisation and adopt methods of total war?"

"That question", said Gandhiji, "is legitimate but it is beyond me. I can only say Free India will make common cause with the Allies. I cannot say that Free India will take part in militarism or choose to go the non-violent way. But I can say without hesitation that if I can turn India to non-violence I will certainly do so. If I succeed in converting 40 crores of people to non-violence, it will be a tremendous thing, a wonderful transformation."

"But you won't oppose a militarist effort by civil disobedience?" Mr. Snow pertinently asked.

"I have no such desire. I cannot oppose Free India's will with civil disobedience, it would be wrong."

M. D.

A TWO MINUTES' INTERVIEW

The number of Indian and foreign correspondents in Wardha at the present moment is unprecedentedly large, but it is quite natural looking to the momentous issues that the Working Committee have got to decide. But it makes it difficult for one in Gandhiji's health and with his preoccupations to meet them all. I have had to ask them to wait until the end of the Working Committee deliberations when Gandhiji might meet them all at a single interview. But the correspondent of the *Daily Express* (London) who was among the first to arrive and who was not staying until the end said he would be content with just a couple of minutes' interview, and Gandhiji acceded to his request. He had made up his mind that if the demand for withdrawal which seemed to gather strength every day was rejected, there would be some kind of a movement. So he asked:

"Would you say that your movement will make it more difficult or less difficult for us to keep the Japanese out of India?"

"Our movement," said Gandhiji, "will make it more difficult for the Japanese to come in. But of course if there is no cooperation from Britain and the Allies, I cannot say."

"But", said Mr. Young, "think of the war as a whole. Do you think that your new movement will help the Allied nations towards victory, which you have said you also desire?"

"Yes, if my submission is accepted."

"What do you mean by your submission?—That Britain should offer non-violent battle?"

"No, no. My submission that British rule in India should end. If that is accepted victory for the Allied powers is assured. Then India will become an independent power, and thus a real ally, while now she is only a slave. The result of my movement, if it is sympathetically responded to, is bound to be speedy victory. But if it is misunderstood by the British and they take up the attitude that they would like to crush it, then they would be responsible for the result, not I."

This was far from convincing Mr. Young. He would not think of any movement with equanimity. So he made an appeal to Gandhiji's sentiment—a sentiment he had more than once expressed:

"Mr. Gandhi, you have been in London yourself. Have you no comment to make on the heavy bombings which the British people have sustained?"

"Oh yes. I know every nook and corner of London where I lived for three years so many years ago, and somewhat of Oxford and Cambridge and Manchester too; but it is London I specially feel for. I used to read in the Inner Temple Library, and would often attend Dr. Parker's sermons in the Temple Church. My heart goes out to the people, and when I heard that the Temple Church was bombed I bled. And the bombing of the Westminster Abbey and other ancient edifices affected me deeply."

"Then don't you think," said Mr. Young, "it would be wiser to postpone your movement until we

have settled with the Germans and the Japanese?"

"No, because I know you will not settle with the Germans without us. If we were free, we could give you cent per cent cooperation in our own manner. It is curious that such a simple thing is not understood. Britain has today no contribution from a free India. Tomorrow as soon as India is free, she gains moral strength and a powerful ally in a free nation—powerful morally. This raises England's power to the nth degree. This is surely self-proved."

Sevagram, 11-7-'42

M. D.

CASUAL NOTES

Indian News in England

Excerpts from British newspapers just received give one a fair idea of the kind of news from India on which Britain is fed. Thus the Calcutta correspondent of the *Star* writing towards the end of April asserted that "Gandhi has become a lone voice crying in the wilderness of non-violence," that it meant "definitely the end of the Mahatma as an Indian political leader." That however represents his views. As for news this is what he has to say:

"I was present at Allahabad over the week-end, when Nehru was badly heckled and almost assaulted. The taunts hurled at Nehru, coupled with the obvious annoyance at the inability of the Congress leaders to give a lead to the Congress, showed me more plainly than I have seen before how easy it would be for a real Indian leader, with a policy of practical value and general compromise, to stride on to the stage and hold his position as the man of the hour. True, I would not be so bold as to state that there is such a man in the offing. The Madras Congress leader, Mr. Rajagopalachariar may turn out just the man."

The correspondent visualises "a trial of strength between Pandit Nehru and Mr. Rajagopalachariar", of which I am sure both are equally unaware.

Another Calcutta correspondent—the representative of the *Observer*, gave this wonderful evidence of his capacity to understand what Gandhiji says and writes:

"He (Gandhiji) has also made clear that whereas men must on no account fight, women are expected to defend their honour themselves, since 'God has given them nails and teeth.' Naturally, these teachings affront the manhood and commonsense of the majority of the Indian public and also Indian women, who in some parts of Bengal are organising themselves and asking for arms to defend themselves."

At The Old Game

That however may be dismissed as arising out of ignorance or of stupidity. What is far more subtle and insidious is Sir Stanley Reed's analysis of the breakdown of the Cripps proposals. He writes in the *Spectator*:-

"Far deeper was the eleventh-hour demand that the executive authority should be forthwith transferred to a cabinet of Indian leaders, untrammelled by any control of the Viceroy or the British Cabinet. Sir Stafford's analysis of that proposal is conclusive; it would vest sole authority in a nominated, non-responsible irremovable body, dominant over the minorities, and

free to keep or break the pledges to which the British Government stands irrevocably committed.

"Were these the basic reasons for the rejection of the Declaration? I suggest not. Behind this facade lie deep-rooted forces—on the one hand, the refusal of the Congress to compromise on any solution which does not leave it in entire command of the destinies of India, without qualification or reserve; on the other, with the minorities, the tremendous but intangible influence of fear. The great body of Moslems, with the Scheduled Castes, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikhs, fear that their political, social and economic rights will be insecure under a government entirely dominated by Congress or, in other words, caste-Hindus. When we speak of minorities let us be clear what we mean. During the Second Round Table Conference figures were produced, and not challenged, showing that the "minorities" represent fifty-two per cent. of the Indian people. Until there is some abatement of Congress pretensions, and a genuine appeasement of minority fears, no final settlement is possible."

For one thing the demand for cabinet responsibility was not an eleventh hour demand, but the demand for the written implementation of a verbal promise that Sir Stafford had been throughout the negotiations manking. That the Cabinet, if it had been created, was not to be a Congress Cabinet but a mixed one, every one knew. And that the proposals would have no meaning without a genuine cabinet is conceded even by Edward Thompson:

"The break clearly came over the matter of cabinet government. Most people will agree that the division of defence functions finally offered covered all that could be fairly asked in war-time—if the Government had been a genuine Cabinet."

The reference to the Second Round Table Conference and the "Minorities" Pact is mischievous in the extreme. The statement that the clever figures were not challenged is an astonishing statement. Sir Stanley knows very well indeed that the 'minorities' do not represent fifty-two per cent. of the Indian people, and that the Congress is not synonymous with caste-Hindus. But having backed the Muslims, they must adopt their argument, however absurd it may be.

But we simply refuse to enter into this controversy now. The Congress demand for the withdrawal of the British rule is the rebellion of an anguished people against the diabolical game of divide and rule, and the refusal to allow the Britisher any longer to arbitrate between different sections of Indians. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru would weigh his words fifty times before he uttered them, and when he said he would not reconcile himself to "dictator Amery's" dictation, he meant more than he said. The expanded Council wherewith an attempt is being made to bamboozle America—all the British papers make no secret of the fact that the Cripps proposals were made in order to appease America—is neither national nor Indian. What India wants is not a Council nominated by Britain but by a Free India after the British have made their exit from the Indian stage.

A Dictatorship

That today it is a dictatorship—whether it is of Lord Linlithgow or Mr. Amery makes not the slightest difference—is not denied even by the Britishers themselves. Sir Lionel Haworth, writing in a British journal, thus describes the limitless powers of the Viceroy:—

"While in fact the Viceroy works through the established system in India, he can at any time assume powers which equal, if they do not exceed, the powers which are held by the President of the United States of America.

"These powers are in hereditary descent from Clive and Warren Hastings, limited only by the necessary changes which have come from the march of time.

"Let us take a few concrete examples. Could the Viceroy introduce conscription into India? The answer is 'yes' . . .

"Could he take over factories and devote them to Government work as we have done in England? Again the answer is yes. But all factories are already working overtime in Government work. In both circumstances he has only to promulgate an ordinance signed by himself and his order would become law.

"He can take over land that is necessary for defence, under powers which are already in existence. He can build new forts and take any other defence measures that are necessary. He can build aerodromes or he can improve ports and harbours. He can move troops and evacuate civilians, as indeed has already been done at Madras. . . .

"Thus it will be seen that there is no limit to what the Viceroy can and may do, and a refusal of the Congress to take part has little effect on the actual war-work."

It is from this dictatorship that the nation wants to get free and would not hesitate to launch a struggle for it.

An Englishman's Analysis

That it is impossible to fool all people at all times is apparent from a largely attended meeting of the Richmond Labour Party which was addressed by George Phippen. Having referred to Britain's broken promises after the last war, he traced the history of the nationalist movement and analysed the causes of Sir Stafford Cripps' failure. The *Thames Valley Times* gives a long report of his speech from which I take the following extract:

"Sir Stafford Cripps' mission had failed because the Indian leadership was not satisfied that the Government set up during the war would be truly national, representing free India; that the suggestions meant an extension of the power of the Viceroy or his council, and did not give India sufficient initiative to win the war. According to his statement his own view did not differ widely from that expressed by Amery that India could get her freedom only to the extent that she was completely united. Only Fascist countries could get near that because they were able to smash opposition. We were

united to wage war, but we knew that the moment war ended, there would be a good deal of disagreement in Great Britain. So with India. South Africa had only shown a bare majority for entering the war, but no one suggested taking away self-government from South Africa. One was driven to the conclusion that Indians had not received freedom because they had not been prepared to fight for it.

"Reasons advanced for the British control of India were the same as those advanced by Japan for the control of China—that it was a big country, full of internal dissensions, backward economically and politically, and that it was our duty to take charge.

"Indian people would eventually get their freedom, and it was very much better if they got it, as the result of a decent deal between the two countries than as the result of a violent quarrel; we saw legacies of bitterness in Ireland, where we could not use the naval bases in the west.

"In answer to questions, the speaker said that the Soviet Union had created harmony in 20 years, in spite of differences of race, language and standards of living. It seemed marvellous that the Indians had not exploited the present situation to the extent they might have; the British Government had exploited the fact that they were anti-Fascist and did not want to hinder the war.

"Asked if there would be civil war if we cleared out, the speaker said the implication was that they were a violent people; this came from Christendom, which was at war for the second time in 20 years."

Sevagram, 11-7-42

M. D.

Notice

Readers will please note that a branch of the Navajivan Karyalaya has been recently opened at Surat (Kanjibazar) and at Rajkot (Savani Buildings, Sadar). Copies of the three weeklies, *Harijan* (English), *Harijanbandhu* (Gujarati) and *Harijansevak* (Hindustani), and of our Gujarati monthly, *Shikshana ane Sahitya*, as also our publications, will be available there. The subscriptions for the weeklies and the monthly will also be received there.

Manager

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HARIJAN

12 pages

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

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AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, JULY 12, 1942

[TWO ANNAS

Notes

For Middlemen

I am having pathetic letters from upper poor people bitterly complaining about grain merchants. The substance of these letters is, "why should we serve these merchants when they will not sell grain, though they have the stock, unless we pay prices higher than those fixed by the Government and in every case at prices beyond our reach? What is there left for us but to starve or loot?"

The complaint is just and universal. The Government is no doubt most answerable for this state of things. They have sent out grain and they do not know how to deal with the stock there is in the country. Prices must be regulated and there must be grain offices like post offices where people can buy grain like stamps. But people cannot starve while Government are learning wisdom. It is therefore the duty of the whole merchantile community to take the matter into their own hands and ensure a regular supply of grain to the poor at reasonable rates. The Government can't interfere with any such humanitarian effort. It will be a real help to them if the merchants perform what is their obvious duty. This requires voluntary co-operation of the whole merchantile community of India. But the beginning must be made with the provinces or even districts. The matter brooks no delay. Hunger knows no law and bread-or rather grain-riots are sure to break out all over the country if energetic benevolent measures are not taken in time.

Sevagram, 7-7-'42

A. I. S. A. and Kindred Institutions

The question of the connection with present politics of the members and the staff of the A. I. S. A., A. I. V. I. A., The Hindustani Talimi Sangha and the kindred institutions was raised at the recent meeting of the A. I. S. A. held in Wardha and is being raised by numerous correspondents. It is better therefore for me to give my opinion in sufficient detail for the guidance of the persons concerned. These institutions, though some are creations of the Congress, are wholly autonomous and unconnected with Congress or other politics. Their mission is humanitarian, social, educational,

economic, or all combined. Their work is wholly constructive and creative. But it is true that most men and women in charge of them are Congressmen or Congress-minded, though they are open to all. There are cases of men unconnected with the Congress being found actively engaged in working or aiding them. These institutions must not lose this non-political character of theirs, if they are to retain their prestige, usefulness, and efficiency such as it is.

This is simple enough. But the question raised is complicated. It is clear that the members and the staff may not take part in any civil resistance movement and be still connected with these organisations. But what are they to do if they see a civil resister belaboured or a general lathi charge takes place in front of them? I say unhesitatingly that the workers in these institutions are bound to render such aid as they can at the moment without considering the consequences. This intervention is itself pure humanitarian work. Persons engaged in these institutions must not be cowards nor may their work be used as a halter round their necks making them useless for service. It is this fear of losing one's job or risking the safety of one's organisation that has played a large part in hindering our march to freedom. During the previous struggles all the most scrupulous care to avoid even the remotest suspicion of participation in politics did not save the men and these organisations from the attention of the authorities. Therefore the golden rule is to dare to do the right at any cost. But there should be no camouflage, no secrecy, no make-believe. Those who feel the urge to take part in the coming movement must resign before joining it. In all other respects the organisations should run their even course. Every moment they are building the temple of liberty and when it is won they will all be required as specialists for the numerous nation-building activities. Let them therefore diligently add to their knowledge and usefulness. During all these twenty-two years the true workers have proved their worth, they are responsible for creating and distributing lacs worth of material and lacs of rupees among lacs of poor men and women who, but for the work provided, would have lived in a state of semi-starvation.

Sevagram, 6-7-'42

M. K. G.

THE GROUNDWORK FOR INDEPENDENCE

(By J. C. Kumarappa)

Before good bread can be made the dough has to be kneaded well. Similarly adequate preparation has to proceed any system of organisation if such a system is to be effective. Great preparations are needed to attain and maintain independence through non-violent means.

As we had long been taught to look at economics through the window of money economy most of us associate capitalism with a method of production in which accumulated wealth is sunk in the equipment needed to produce goods. This description is partly correct. If this were all, capitalism would have died long ago as there is no means of propagating itself. For the continuity of its existence capitalism has to create a clientele for itself by setting up social customs and fashions which people will follow without questioning their rationale. The life of any organisation depends on its capacity thus to make a place for itself. Therefore, a more correct classification would be the one which sorts out the methods of production according to the manner by which a system seeks to control the environment and circumstances of human beings so as to justify its existence and to create and retain its market and custom. Such a classification will be human rather than monetary.

An Enslaving System

The shopkeeper would like to see the wants of the people increase, he would like to supply their needs himself, and the more helpless the people are to help themselves the better will his own business be. Therefore, his interest is identical with making his customers depend on him. To this end he will study their needs most minutely and attempt to supply them better than they themselves can. The ultimate result of this will be the customer will become emaciated, numbed and paralysed for lack of scope to develop his faculties and the shopkeeper will become fat, flourishing and resourceful. This is what is happening under centralised methods of production. We witness the degradation of races and nations who have become dependent politically and economically on those who supply their wants under various masks of trusteeship for civilising backward races. They give their victims an opiate that with the aid of factory production people can raise their standard of living, can buy standardised goods cheaply and have more of them. In the measure in which manufacturers succeed in doping their victims into thinking that it is to the customer's advantage to take their help to that extent only can the manufacturers thrive.

We see such helplessness taking alarming strides in countries like the U. S. A. where a woman need not even cook her food. Everything is done for her. She can walk into a shop and get her soup tablets, meat and fish courses prepared and tinned, freshly made puddings and sweets, and well preserved fruits. All the trouble she needs to take is to set the table and dine. We find this trend

in our country. Quaker oats, shredded wheat, corn flakes, jams, marmalade and hundred and one things are becoming more and more common, and half-baked medical men advocate these to ill-educated women and repeat the salesman's slogans about these food articles being richer in nutrition than home made wheat *dhalia*, seasonal fruits, etc. If this goes on, in a few years we may find our *bazars* stocked with chapaties, cooked dal and rice made in England and sent out in attractive containers and our ambitious medical men may tell us that these very articles prepared in the English climate and latitude have special food values as compared with food made in India! Women who have more money than sense will patronise them. In time the art of cooking will be forgotten, but the London manufacturers will flourish. We need only look around with our eyes open to know that this is no fairy tale. The capitalistic structure of centralised production rests on the tombstones of its customers. Therefore, judged from the point of view of its effect on human beings, centralised production may be appropriately described as an enslaving, parasitic, or as Tagore would have it, cannibalistic system. Once the victim realises the true situation, bestirs himself and sets about supplying all his own needs the capitalist's reign is doomed.

An Emancipating System

As against this, a method of production and consumption which will awaken the people to realise their own possibilities will be emancipatory, creative or evolutive system. Our villages can meet their wants in two ways: 1. provide what they need by their own efforts, and 2. forego such of what they need as cannot be supplied by themselves. The reaction will be progressive self-reliance and self-advancement, though in the beginning the so-called standard of living may appear low. Our goal is a state where the villagers will supply all their own requirements and that of the city people. Their effort to do so will bring employment to millions and make for a better circulation of money. This is the only permanent way of dispelling poverty and creating wealth.

Freedom

What shall we do with political freedom even if it is given as a gift? It will be meaningless as we shall not be able to turn it to good account. As our people learn to produce all that is needed by the country they will acquire self-reliance which is the basis of freedom, while dependence on others is the essence of slavery. When the villagers have become self-reliant, and attain freedom, they will be able to look after themselves. Their panchayats will function, they will settle their own disputes and banish litigation, they will control their water-supply and sanitation, build their own roads, run their schools and to an extent tax themselves and thus govern themselves. If we are not prepared to take up all this responsibility our second state will be worse than the first.

As a corollary to this, such discipline and initiative as may be generated by self-directing and

regulating villages will enable us to put up a non-violent barrage of defence against any foreign aggression, without submitting to the humiliating experience of begging other nations to help defend our own hearths and homes.

GURU GOVIND SINGH

(By M. K. Gandhi)

At last after diligent search Mahadev Desai and others have traced the writing in which I have referred to Guru Govind Singh. It appears in *Young India* of 9th April, 1925. It is headed 'My Friend the Revolutionary'. I would commend it to my Sikh friends and, for that matter, others the whole of the article. It is seasonable and they will profit by it, whether they accept or reject the views propounded in it. Here I must content myself with only relevant extracts from that article. Here they are:

"One of your objections against the revolutionaries is that their movement is not mass-movement, consequently the mass at large will be very little benefitted by the revolution, for which we are preparing. That is indirectly saying that we shall be most benefitted by it. Is it really what you mean to say? Do you believe that those persons who are ever ready to die for their country—those mad lovers of their country—I mean the revolutionaries of India in whom the spirit of *Nishkama Karma* reigns, will betray their motherland and secure privileges for a life—this trifling life? It is true that we will not drag the mass just now in the field of action, because we know that it is weak; but when the preparation is complete we shall call them in the open field. We profess to understand the present Indian psychology full well, because we daily get the chance of weighing our brethren along with ourselves. We know that the mass of India is after all Indian, it is not weak by itself but there is want of efficient leaders; so when we have begot the number of leaders required by constant propaganda and preaching, and the arms, dragging the mass in the open field to prove that they are the descendants of Shivaji, Ranajit, Pratap and Govind Singh. Besides we have been constantly preaching that the mass is not for the revolution but the revolution is for the mass. Is it sufficient to remove your prejudice in this connection?"

I neither say nor imply that the revolutionary benefits if the masses do not. On the contrary, and as a rule, the revolutionary never benefits in the ordinary sense of the word. If the revolutionaries succeed in attracting, not 'dragging', the masses to them, they will find that the murderous campaign is totally unnecessary. It sounds very pleasant and exciting to talk of 'the descendants of Shivaji, Ranjit, Pratap and Govind Singh'. But is it true? Are we all descendants of these heroes in the sense in which the writer understands it? We are their countrymen, but their descendants are the military classes. We may in future be able to obliterate caste, but today it persists, and therefore the claim put up by the writer cannot in my opinion be sustained.

"Last of all, I shall ask you to answer these questions: Was Guru Govind Singh a misguided patriot because he believed in warfare for noble cause? What will you

like to say about Washington, Garibaldi and Lenin? What do you think of Kamal Pasha and De Valera? Would you like to call Shivaji and Pratap well meaning and sacrificing physicians who prescribed arsenic when they should have given fresh grape-juice? Will you like to call Krishna Europeanised because he believed also in the *vinasha of dushkritas*?"

This is a hard or rather awkward question. But I dare not shirk it. In the first instance Guru Govind Singh and the others whose names are mentioned did not believe in secret murder. In the second, these patriots knew their work and their men, whereas the modern Indian revolutionary does not know his work. He has not the men, he has not the atmosphere, that the patriots mentioned had. Though my views are derived from my theory of life I have not put them before the nation on that ground. I have based my opposition to the revolutionaries on the sole ground of expedience. Therefore, to compare their activities with those of Guru Govind Singh or Washington or Garibaldi or Lenin would be most misleading and dangerous. But by test of the theory of non-violence I do not hesitate to say that it is highly likely that, had I lived as their contemporary and in the respective countries, I would have called every one of them a misguided patriot, even though a successful and brave warrior. As it is, I must not judge them. I disbelieve history so far as details of acts of heroes are concerned. I accept broad facts of history and draw my own lessons for my conduct. I do not want to repeat it in so far as the broad facts contradict the highest laws of life. But I positively refuse to judge men from the scanty material furnished to us by history. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. Kamal Pasha and De Valera too I cannot judge. But for me as a believer in non-violence out and out they cannot be my guides in life in so far as their faith in war is concerned. I believe in Krishna perhaps more than the writer. But my Krishna is the Lord of the Universe, the creator, preserver and destroyer of us all. He may destroy because He creates. But I must not be drawn into a philosophical or religious argument with my friends. I have not the qualifications for teaching my philosophy of life. I have barely qualifications for practising the philosophy I believe. I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought word and deed, but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. I admit, and assure my revolutionary friends, it is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure for me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. But all that pain and the pleasure are for me. The revolutionaries are at liberty to reject the whole of my philosophy. To them I merely present my own experiences as a co-worker in the same cause even as I have successfully presented them to the Ali Brothers and many other friends. They can and do applaud whole-heartedly the action of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and possibly De Valera and Lenin. But they realise with me that India is not like Turkey or Ireland or Russia and that revolutionary activity is suicidal at this stage of the country's life at any rate, if not for all time, in a country so vast, so hopelessly divided and with the masses so deeply sunk in pauperism and so fearfully terror-struck."

I reverted to the same subject in another article written a short time after, from which I need take only the following lines:

"My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all deeply religious teachers and reformers, that they were all Hindus, and that Guru Govind Singh was one of the greatest defenders of Hinduism. I believe too that he drew the sword in its defence. But I cannot judge his actions nor can I use him as my model so far as his resort to the sword is concerned."

It must be clear even to him who runs that I never applied the word 'misguided patriot' to the Great Guru and that I have not written a word in disrespect or of which I have any reason to be ashamed or to repent. I abide by every word I have said in that article. I hope that now that the source of the mischief has been traced it will abate entirely and the Sikhs will count me, though a humble Hindu, as a fellow devotee of the Panth. Sevagram, 4-7-'42

HARIJAN

July 12

1942

TO MUSLIM CORRESPONDENTS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

"How can you think of a mass movement for liberation without first closing with Muslims?" ask Muslim correspondents whose letters fill my file. I used at one time to think like my correspondents. But I see that for the moment I cannot reach the Muslim mind. The Muslim League blocks my way. I try to read the League newspapers. They give me a peep into the League mind in so far as they represent it. In their opinion I am thoroughly untrustworthy. Even my services during the Khilafat days wear for them a sinister meaning. I am quite clear in my mind that this is a passing phase. I am not aware of having done a single disservice to any Muslim cause or a Muslim person. Thank God, even today I claim numerous Muslim friends.

I do not know how to get rid of the distrust. "Give Pakistan", say my critics. I answer, "It is not in my giving." If I felt convinced of the rightness of the demand, I should certainly work for it side by side with the League. But I do not. I would like to be convinced. Nobody has yet told me all its implications. Those that are described in the anti-Pakistan Press are too terrible to contemplate. But I cannot take them from the opposition. Only the protagonists know what they want and mean. I plead for such an exposition. Surely Pakistanis want to convert the opposition, not to force them? Has an attempt been ever made to meet the opposition in a friendly manner and to convert them? I am sure the Congress is willing to be converted, let alone me.

But what I am to do meanwhile? I feel that now is the time for India to play an effective part in the fortunes of the war, if she becomes free from British servitude. I am convinced too that nothing

stands in the way of that freedom except British unwillingness to give up India as the happy hunting-ground for the British that she has been for three centuries. If she gives up India, she might as well give up fighting, says the imperialist. If such is the case, what is all this war for? The original fighters are Great Britain and Germany. Was India the hidden stake between the two? This is all speculation I know. The truth will be known presently. Thinking Indians cannot idle away their time. I think that even a large number, if not all of us, prepared to undergo any sacrifice that may fall to our lot, would impress the British rulers that they can no longer hold India as a British possession. I believe too that such a number is available. Needless to say, their action must be non-violent, irrespective of their belief, as even a military man's has often to be, on behalf of his cause. The fight has been conceived in the interest of the whole of India. The fighters will gain no more than the poorest Indian. They will fight, not to seize power but to end the foreign domination, cost what it may.

What will happen after, if ever we reach that stage, will depend upon how we act when the all-powerful British hand is withdrawn. We may quarrel among ourselves or we may adjust our quarrels and agree to set up ordered rule on behalf of the people. It may be a democratic constitution or unadulterated autocracy or oligarchy. The conception is not that of a settlement with the British Government. That could happen only if there is a settlement between the principal parties, and as a preliminary the Congress and the League. But that so far as I can see is not to be.

Therefore the only settlement with the British Government can be that their rule should end leaving India to her fate. Thus assuming that the British leave, there is no government and no constitution, British or other. Therefore there is no Central Government. Militarily the most powerful party may set up its rule and impose it on India, if the people submit. Muslims may declare Pakistan and nobody may resist them. Hindus may do likewise, Sikhs may set up their rule in territories inhabited by them. There is no end to the possibilities. And to all this idle speculation let me suggest one more addition. The Congress and the League being best organised parties in the country may come to terms and set up a provisional government acceptable to all. And this may be followed by a duly elected Constituent Assembly.

The movement has only one aim—that is of displacing the British Power. If that happy event comes about and if it is followed by a stable government, it will most assuredly decide the fate of the war—I shall hope in a non-violent manner. India can show no other strength during this war at any rate. Why should not Muslims who believe in Pakistan but also believe in Independent India join such a struggle? If on the other hand they believe in Pakistan through British aid and under British aegis, it is a different story. I have no place in it.

Sevagram, 6-7-'42

OUR ORDERED ANARCHY

In the midst of a world of woes the following account of conditions and happenings in Orissa may be passed over lightly by the casual reader. But though the blood and thunder may be less than that of the war fronts, the root tragedy it brings to view is deeper. That tragedy is perpetrated by one belligerent nation on another, whereas this tragedy is perpetrated by a so-called protecting government on its subjects.

I came to Orissa on May 11th. (Since then I have been almost continually moving about the province, in the company of Babu Harekrishna Mehtab, visiting places where people are in trouble and distress, owing to the present crisis. We have toured through the villages, putting up as we went along, in the peasants' little homes and we have had public and private meetings in big towns, besides which I have had interviews and discussions with government officials of all grades from the Chief Secretary to village clerks. The following description is based on these experiences.

It is difficult to know where to begin and on what to concentrate in such a tale of confusion and suspicion. So in order to give a living picture to the reader, I will depict in detail one scene in the drama, and make but a passing mention of the rest.

On the day of my arrival we started straight off for a tour of the coastal area where the little villages are dotted about like islands in a vast sea of brown fields. When the rains come these lands go under water, and the villages become islands indeed. Throughout these flood areas, all along the coast, the villagers have been ordered to immobilize their boats. At every place where we went, the villagers told us that to be without their boats in the rains would literally mean death. There is no other means of getting about. Even for answering the calls of nature it is necessary to go in a boat. The villagers were in despair. "Are we then to be killed even before the Japanese invasion?" they asked. "No, you must gather up courage when the floods come and resist such an order." What else could we say?

After this experience, we were faced with the problem of the canal districts. Here all the canals have been kept dry by order of the military authorities, lest the waterways might be of use to the Japanese. Each year the canals are dried off for a certain period; but before cutting off the water, notice is given, and the villagers have time to fill up their tanks and other water-supplies. This time no notice was given, and the villagers were left high and dry. When the usual season came for letting in the water nothing was done, and the canals have remained dry. The working of the land has been all upset and the villagers have been put to great hardship. Appeals have been sent up to the government, but the reply is always that the matter has been referred to the military department, from where no answer comes. One wonders how much, if at all, these orders have been thought out. When I look at these broad dry canal beds

they strike me as more serviceable for bringing up tanks and other heavy equipment, than they would be if full of water.

After drying up the canals the government got the bright idea of sending round the province 50 propagandists for the "grow more food" campaign. "But what is this!" exclaimed the unfortunate propagandists, "the canals are all dried up." "O yes, the canals are dry, you had better appeal to the military department."

Now at last the rains have begun.

In the cities there is an atmosphere of helplessness and panic, specially since the government notice of May 24th prohibiting the formation of any volunteer organizations for self-protection of any groups for patrolling, except under government authority and guidance. This notice has had a very bad effect, especially amongst the merchants who do not dare to keep proper stocks of food. Cuttack, which will be completely isolated if the bridges are blown up, is running now-a-days, on a fortnight's supply and Puri, which gets its stocks from Cuttack, is still more hand-to-mouth. There the merchants' troubles are further increased by the fact that bookings for goods between Cuttack and Puri are often closed without notice, and for indefinite periods. Reasoning and appeals are at present being tried for getting the government to revise its policy regarding self-protection.

And now for the scene which I want to depict in detail, and which, indeed, is not yet finished. As I write these lines I am sitting in the village where the main tragedy occurred only six days ago.

While staying in Cuttack I began to hear accounts of an aerodrome that is being prepared in this area, and the government plans for evacuating several villages around the site. I decided to go and have a look at the place, and about the end of May spent two days with the District Congress workers bicycling around the area. What I saw and heard was very disquieting, and as soon as our programme would enable us, I planned to return with Mehtab Babu, who was engaged elsewhere at the time of this first visit.

In the meantime we put the matter before the Chief Secretary, the Collector and subordinate government officials. They listened sympathetically, especially the Collector, who expressed himself anxious to do everything he could, within reason, to alleviate the plight of the villagers. The position was briefly as follows: Lands for the site of an aerodrome were requisitioned last December. Most of the land is bare, rocky upland, the property of a zemindar. Round the edge of this upland many villages are situated, and a few of their fields were also requisitioned. The chief difficulty, however, arose when the military department announced its intention of taking possession of eight of these villages, and then too, before the rains. Orders for evacuation were served 'only in the beginning of June. The civil administration took up the military instructions and proceeded to warn the villagers that they must go to sites two to three miles off which would be allotted to them. The villagers were

measured and evaluated for compensation, and everything pointed to an immediate evacuation. At the same time the new sites had not been prepared, not even wells or tanks had been dug, the compensation fixed upon was quite inadequate and the monsoon was now rapidly approaching, when all building operations would become impossible. The villagers were desperate and said they would rather die of bombs in their homes, or risk the perils of attempted evacuation by force, than go out into the rains to die of exposure and want.

Alongside this evacuation dilemma, the problem of imported labour had been unnecessarily created. Though large quantities of local labour were available some 3,000 labourers had been imported from Hyderabad (Deccan), U. P., Travancore and Cochin. These were paid Re. 1/- a day, along with food, and the local labourers were paid, for the same work, 6 annas per day with no extras. This naturally led to heart-burning and then, added to this, the new labourers were housed in camps built right alongside, and in some cases half inside, these villages. For this huge imported population, as well as for the cement-work and road-making in the aerodrome, no special water-supply was provided for; for all purposes the wells and tanks of the villagers were drawn upon. For sanitation no kind of arrangement was made. And then, finally, as if occasion for frictions and fracas were not enough, toddy-shops were added. One big village was burdened with no less than 1,500 Travancore and Cochin labourers and a toddy-shop right up against the side of the village. The inhabitants sent up a petition to the Collector, but before it could pass through the red-tape labyrinths of officialism, the explosion came.

On the morning of June 14th, for a trifling reason, the outside labourers rushed into the village with sticks, stones and fire, and before anyone could bring them under control, 40 villagers had been wounded, 258 rooms including bazar shops had been burnt and looted and 88 families rendered homeless and propertyless.

We heard the news first through the Collector who had just received the information, when we went to him in Cuttack for a discussion on the evacuation problem. So here was a new problem, or rather the fruits of the other, in bitterest form! Investigation, and temporary relief had to be organized forthwith. The Marwaris, as is their wont, were first in the field with distribution of grains, and government servants of all grades came rushing in. The law is now going through its tortuous channels of identification, attestation, application, evaluation and the rest. In these matters, I am happy to say, the government officials are willingly taking our help.

It is to be hoped that ultimately substantial relief will be granted, for the villagers have been the helpless victims of gross mismanagement and confusion of government departments, civil and military. But who is to blame? Both the Collector (Indian) and the Flying Corps Officer (British) in command at the aerodrome, are good, sincere

people, from whom I have received immediate sympathy and help in all matters connected with the villagers. It is the system, the foreign system, the foreign language, the foreign rule in all its ugliness, bound up in prestige and red-tape and giving shelter to all sorts of imprincipled, time-serving officials, contractors and other hangers-on.

In the midst of this tragedy the evacuation problem had to be immediately settled as the rains are upon us, and I am thankful to say that, thanks to the sympathetic attitude of the Collector and the military officer in command, the evacuation has been postponed for the duration of the rains, and the question of compensation will be reconsidered in detail. At the same time it has been agreed that as much local labour as possible should be employed, at 12 annas per day (instead of 6), that the outside labourers should be reduced to a minimum, and that those, if any, that remain shall now be removed to an isolated camp, out of direct touch with any of the villages.

The cause of the looting and arson is still under investigation, but one fact alone, which has come to light, makes matters sufficiently clear. A number of these coolies, especially those from Travancore, are criminals released from jail for sending out in labour corps. Many of them have tough records of crime to their account. To put such men in the company of hundreds of rough labourers, pay them Re. 1/- and food per day, and station them in an open camp by the side of a large village with a well stocked bazar, was to invite certain trouble.

And now the village is a pitiable sight. The burnt houses stand gaunt and roofless, with nothing left but the blackened mud walls. Inside not a burnable thing remains. Furniture, grain, clothes, everything except iron fittings, tool heads and utensils, have vanished into smoke and ashes.

From house to house, from quarter to quarter I went, seeing the same heart-rending destruction. In one little home the owner, with shaking hands and trembling voice, showed me the burnt out room where his child had been born only the day before the attack. The next morning the young mother had to rise up and fly as best she could with the baby in her arms. "And there," he said, pointing to a corner in the yard, "our goat was burnt to death. The cow escaped, but what has happened to the calf we do not know. It is lost or killed." Then he showed me the black heaps of smouldering rice and pulses—his precious little stocks of food to see him and his family through these hard times—all gone.

Such is the ruin and sorrow that administrative mismanagement and muddle can bring upon innocent people in the twinkling of an eye!

20-6-'42

Mira

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"FOR WHITES ONLY"

[Pearl Buck is the only American woman to win the Nobel Prize for literature, awarded for her great novels forming a kind of Chinese saga — *The Good Earth* and others. She lived for seventeen years in Nanking, and has now written a novel *Dragon Seed* describing the fall and rape of the city after the Japanese assault. She is one of the editors of *Asia* which may be said to be devoted exclusively to the cause of democracy for all peoples — white, black or yellow. Her appeal to Americans to put their own house in order in the following article condensed from the March number of *Asia* is timely and applies to Britain as well. The caption of her article is *Tinder for Tomorrow*, meaning thereby that unless the Allies give visible evidence of their fight being not only for the white people but for all the races they have suppressed, that fact in itself will supply enough material for a fiercer conflagration tomorrow. The extracts are reproduced here to show that Gandhiji's demand for withdrawal has the support of the best mind of America. M. D.]

Worse than Folly

.....Race prejudice continues unabated among white people today, the Japanese are saying. Tokyo radio programs daily send their broadcast over Asia in their campaign to drive out the white man. They dwell upon white exploitation of colored troops and cite mistreatment of Filipinos by the American military and similar treatment of Indian troops by the English.

.....The truth is that the white man in the Far East has too often behaved without wisdom or justice to his fellow man. It is worse than folly — it is dangerous today — not to recognise the truth, for in it lies the tinder for tomorrow. Who of us can doubt it who has seen a white policeman beat a Chinese coolie in Shanghai, a white sailor kick a Japanese in Kobe, an English captain lash out with his whip at an Indian vender — who of us, having seen such oriental sights or heard the common contemptuous talk of the white man in any colored country, can forget the fearful bitter hatred in the colored face and the blaze in the dark eyes? Who of us can be so stupid as not to see the future written there? The most dangerous human stupidity has been that of the white race in the baseless prejudice through which even the meanest of white creatures has felt he could despise a king if his skin were dark. Yet, if this stupidity were limited to the mean, how easily it might be cured! But among us even some who are able, even some who are good, are sometimes so blind.

The effect therefore of this Japanese propaganda cannot be lightly dismissed. It lies uneasy in the minds and memories of many at this moment who are loyally allied with Britain and the United States, in the minds and memories of colored peoples of Asia. Yes, and it lies uneasy, too, in the minds and memories of many colored citizens of the United States who cannot deny the charge and must remain loyal in spite of it. For such minds realize that, though Nazism may give them nothing but death, yet the United States and Britain have given them too little for life in the past and not even promises

for the future. Our colored allies proceed to war against the Axis not deceived or in ignorance. They know that it may not be the end of the war for them even when Hitler has gone down and Nazism is crushed and Japan returned to her isles again. The colored peoples know that for them the war for freedom may have to go on against the very white men at whose side they are now fighting.

Fulfil Conditions Today

We must realize, we citizens of the United States, and this whether Britain realizes it or not, that a world based on former principles of empire and imperial behavior is now impossible. It cannot exist. We must make clear our determination for real democracy for all peoples with mutual responsibility demanded of all to fulfil its conditions. Nor can we postpone such decision for democracy by saying, "Let's win this war first." We cannot even win this war without convincing our colored allies — who are most of our allies — that we are not fighting for ourselves as continuing superior over colored peoples. The deep patience of colored peoples is at an end. Everywhere among them there is the same resolve for freedom and equality that white Americans and British have, but it is a grimmer resolve, for it includes the determination to be rid of white rule and exploitation and white race prejudice, and nothing will weaken this will.

.....But if they are not soon convinced, and by unmistakable means, of the sincere democratic determination of the English and Americans, if they fear that they must be reduced one day to fighting for themselves, there will be many thoughtful men and women who will declare openly what they are now thinking and saying secretly, "Will it not be better for us to come to terms, not with Hitler, who is after all a white man of the most arrogant type, but with Japan, and utilize the military and modern resources of that country to free us from white rule?"

It takes no great practical sense for any colored people to see that even if Japan took the position over them of conqueror it would be easier to get rid of one victor than of several. There could have been nothing reassuring or comforting to our Asiatic allies in the closing words of Churchill's first speech in Washington, "The British and American peoples will, for their own safety and the good of all, walk together side by side in majesty, justice and peace." An England, a United States, "walking together in majesty", can only mean to the colored peoples a formidable white imperialism more dangerous to them than anything even a victorious Japan can threaten.

Disprove Japan's Charges

The United States and England are at a very critical moment in this War. Our allies, India, China, the Philippines and Malaya, are waiting for us, whether they tell us so publicly or not, to make clear the stand of the white peoples toward them. Are we all-out for democracy, for total justice, for total peace based on human equality, or are the blessings of democracy to be limited to white people only? The answer must be made clearly and quickly.

To evade the question, to delay the answer, is to reply in the negative, and the United States must now take the lead.

For we cannot now trust to English minds however we admire them, nor to English leadership, however strong. We must think and act for ourselves. If our allies cannot be assured, America may find herself deserted in the Pacific when she supremely needs allies there. It is only natural that England should think first and most of Hitler, the wolf at the door. It is to be expected that English minds cannot take seriously enough the full threat of Japan also to us. Why should they when Americans themselves have not taken Japan seriously enough and do not now take any Asiatic people seriously enough? Pearl Harbor and Manila are today awful witnesses of our ignorance. There will be other witnesses as stern before we are done with this war. If England cannot understand fully our danger in the Pacific, let us not ourselves be misled. We Americans face the Orient as well as Europe, and we face it not as the ruler of a great subject people held under military power. We face an Asia in which we have no long-established power. It is too dangerous for us to accept any estimate of the Pacific except our own. We must for our own sakes give our allies in the Far East confidence in our leadership toward full democracy.

But can the United States provide such leadership? This also the Far Eastern allies are asking. Japan is busily declaring that we cannot. She is declaring in the Philippines, in China, in India, Malaya and even Russia that there is no basis for hope that colored peoples can expect any justice from the people who rule in the United States, namely, the white people. For specific proof the Japanese point to our treatment of our own colored people, citizens of generations in the United States. Every lynching, every race riot, gives joy to Japan. The discriminations of the American army and navy and the air forces against colored soldiers and sailors, the exclusion of colored labor in our defense industries and trade unions, all our social discriminations, are of the greatest aid today to our enemy in Asia, Japan. "Look at America," Japan is saying to millions of listening ears. "Will white Americans give you equality?"

Who can reply with a clear affirmative? The persistent refusal of Americans to see the connection between the colored American and the colored peoples abroad, the continued, and it seems even wilful, ignorance which will not investigate the connection, are agony to those loyal and anxious Americans who know all too well the dangerous possibilities.

Declare for Democracy Today

.... Our ignorance of how they feel is dangerous as the ignorance of England is dangerous, as the ignorance of France was dangerous even to destruction. But ours is a peculiar danger, for one tenth of our own nation is colored. Our relation to the colored peoples and democracy does not

even lie so far off as Africa or India. It is just outside our doors, it is inside our homes. The deepest loyalties today are not national.

But even if Americans realize our danger, our responsibility, our peculiar position, can we produce the necessary leadership for democracy? What is this division between our belief in democracy for all and our practice of democracy only for some? It is not hypocrisy. We Americans are not hypocritical except in small, amusing ways. Talk to any dirt American and he honestly believes in equality and justice and in giving everybody democratic rights. But mention to him the colored man and you will not believe your own ears. This cannot be the same man talking, you will say. No, the colored man cannot have the same treatment as the white man, it seems. "Why?" you inquire. The white American scratches his head. "Well, it just don't work that way," he says, and thereby gives huge comfort to our present enemies, the Japanese.

What is the matter with this American? It is clear enough. He suffers from what is called in psychology a split personality. He is two distinct Americans. One of him is a benevolent, liberty-loving, just man. The other one of him is a creature who may or may not be benevolent but who is certainly undemocratic in his race attitudes, and who, on this subject, throws justice and human equality to the winds as completely as any Fascist.

... Russia is justly proud of her freedom from race prejudices. But let Americans be sure of this — unless we can declare ourselves whole for total democracy now, we shall lose our chance to make the world what we want it to be, we shall lose even our place in the world, whatever our military victories are. For most of the people in the world today are colored.

How can we integrate ourselves for democracy? The first step toward unifying a split personality is to realize that there is the split. The next step is to reject the undesired self. We must be willing to see that our inner division has the gravest relation now to other events, to the success of this war for us, to world events which will shape an entirely new era. Whether it will be a golden age of democracy depends entirely on whether we choose democracy now.

We know this better than we are willing to acknowledge. It must be sternly said that it is the white peoples who have the deepest race prejudices. This is in itself a sign of insecurity and fear. And we do well to be afraid if we intend to persist blindly in our prejudices. If we plan to persist as we are, then we are fighting on the wrong side in this war. We belong with Hitler. For the white man can no longer rule in this world unless he rules by totalitarian military force. Democracy cannot so rule. Democracy, if it is to prevail at this solemn moment in human history, can do so only if it purges itself of that which denies democracy, if it dares to act as it believes.

Pearl Buck

CASUAL NOTES

More War Effort

If the Cripps proposals can be described as the British Government's special contribution in India to their tremendous war-effort, the latest announcement of the new members of the expanded Viceroy's Council and of the new names to fill departed men's posts must be considered to be another contribution of a piece with the previous one.

A Council expanded to ten times its size with similar names cannot turn it into a Council of Free India. And whether one thinks in terms of violence or non-violence none but a Free India can win the war. Mr. Hore-Belisha writing as long ago as the 'occupation of the Andamans by the Japanese—the situation has very considerably worsened for the British since then—uttered the barest truth in these words: "With the authentic voice of a true leader, General Mac Arthur has proclaimed that 'one cannot wage war under present conditions without the support of public opinion...Men will not fight and die without knowing what they are fighting and dying for. In democracies it is essential that the public should know the truth.'

The enemy will be beaten, not by the military sword alone, but by that invincible weapon which is made out of the strong will and resolute spirit of free peoples. Let not censorship blunt that weapon!"

The Terrible Lesson of Burma

But the British character, if it has a toughness that has served them well frequently in history, has a denseness that is impervious to all warnings. We saw the other day how General Alexander gave the lie direct to the Burma Governor's statement about Burma. But even he had to make a guarded statement after what the Governor of Burma had said. The fact would seem to be much worse than General Alexander would let us know. This is what Mr. W. M. Towler wrote in the *Daily Herald* about the "Quislings in Burma:"

"Burmese guerilla bands are fighting for Japan against us. Burmese snipers are picking off British soldiers. Burmese guides are leading Japanese patrols through the jungle. Burmese spies are giving away to enemy information about our military dispositions. This should make us think. Perhaps we are to blame."

That this was not an exaggerated picture is proved by other non-British sources. This was the news flashed from American Western Group Headquarters, South-Western China:

"An American volunteer pilot, returning here from Burma, said today that native Burmese are killing unarmed British citizens. Natives in many districts have rebelled and are killing unarmed Britishers, he said. The Burmese are assisting the advancing Japanese in every possible way. Some armed Burmese forces have joined the Japanese. All over Burma it is dangerous for foreigners to move around unless they are armed, and in some

districts the Burmese have even attacked armed Britishers, he continued. Meanwhile the British are feverishly evacuating all large Burma towns, including Prome and Mandalay. Some are leaving by planes, some by automobile and some are forced to walk. I am unable to estimate the number of British killed, but I believe it is not few."

Mr. Towler attributed this to the many years' policy of bungling in Burma. "After the last war—in which Burmese troops fought gallantly with us—movements began in Burma for constitutional reform, separation of Burma from India, Dominion Status, complete independence. Instead of this we gave them years of wrangling and all the rigmarole of a Round Table Conference. . . . Administration by a governor with carefully chosen counsellors and a hand picked senate to curb the House of Representatives was still regarded by Burma as an insult. . . . Even with war in the heart of Burma today, it may not be too late to admit our faults and remedy our lethargy. It is certainly not too late to learn the lesson of Burma and apply it to other countries—India above all—whose loyalty might still be made as firm as that of the free nations of our commonwealth."

That was on March 25th. In the same month wrote the *Philadelphia Record*:

"The British did not have enough confidence in their hold over the natives at Hongkong or Malay to arm them. And from Burma come eye-witness accounts of Burmese picking this moment to settle old scores with the British by killing Europeans and rioting while the Japs advance. India may be next. . . . Steps can be taken even at this eleventh hour, to erase the memory of past bungling, to make India a full partner in the struggle. The cure will take boldness and imagination. But nothing less will do the job." And the paper added a line about the policy at home (America): "Are we striving, at home, to avoid those mistakes of discrimination, prejudice, inequality and stupidity that may haunt us in the time of trial?"

But the British reply was the Cripps proposals and two months after India's rejection of them comes the expansion of the Viceroy's Council. When Sir Stafford was in India, he said, in reply to a question by journalists, that Britain was lacking in man-power. She certainly seems to be essentially lacking in brain-power and woefully lacking in boldness and imagination to cure past "bunglings". They seem, on the contrary, to delight in piling bungling upon bungling and insult upon insult.

Forced Labour

In fact, there is no improvement anywhere in the traditional policy of Britain to which Mr. Churchill is wedded. Look at this paragraph from 'A London Diary' in the *New Statesman and Nation* for March 14: "Forced labour in Kenya, now passed by the Colonial Office, creates an acute moral dilemma for those people who want to conscribe the native races of the Empire in return for a charter of self-government after the war. I discussed it with an honest-minded member of this group: 'Do you believe that Kenya natives

are needed for war production and not to supply slave labour for employers too bad and farmers too incompetent to attract or pay workers?' 'No.' 'Do you suppose that the Government will offer them—or the natives of Southern Rhodesia, where forced labour threatens also—adequate land, equality of economic opportunity, the abolition of the colour-bar?' 'No.' "Do you consider it possible that self-government will be offered to the Kenya peoples?' 'No.' "

The Common Man

The same writer says that the British "Man-in-the-street" is now seriously discussing the British Empire. He describes his talk with a clerk in a big wholesale business. "Weeks ago, when the Japanese were still only at Kuala Lumpur, we talked about the future of India. George was dubious. 'Give them their freedom, and what happens to our money? That's what you have to look at. What happens to our investments if they get free?' Last week I saw him again. Said George; 'We'll have to give freedom to the Indians. We'll have to give it to the whole blooming Empire. I don't blame the Empire. Wanted to make our money like every one else. But the point is, they've rumbled us. They've got wise to us. And what I say is, it is never any use going on with a game like that once you've been rumbled.' His chief anxiety now is as to whether the Government is 'smart' enough to see, as he does, that 'they've seen through the trick, and the quicker we drop it the better.' "

But Mr. Churchill and Co. are too big to learn anything from the British "man-in-the-street", as they are too arrogant to learn anything from the lesson of Burma.

A Desperate Game

Let us understand the distinction between 'a National Government' and the Government of a 'Free India' that Gandhiji has been asking for. Of course there is no 'Free India' and no national Government, but a national Government even when it comes into being becomes part of the British war-machine, whereas Free India is free to decide the kind of help she can give as an ally, and free even to negotiate honourable terms of peace and stop further carnage. The national Government at best would carry round its neck the halter of the British-war methods and the British war-policy. In an article written about two months ago I tried to show that such a national Government, however satisfactory it might be, was incapable of fighting a successful military war against the Nazis and the Japanese. There is evidence accumulating in favour of this contention every day. Apart from the disloyalty of the Burmans in Burma there was superior military knowledge and strategy on the part of the Japanese, there was utter unreadiness in Singapore, and now spacious grounds are being given for the terrible disaster in Libya. There were tanks we are told—the strength being 7 to 5—there was full military equipment, superior air power, and at least equal man-power; and even Mr. Churchill has failed to explain why then the

British failed. The *New Statesman* almost anticipated the disaster months ago and gave the reasons too: "Round this matter of tanks revolve our own fortunes in Libya. Rommel has swept us out of Bengazi and far beyond it (1) because he was reinforced by sea, (2) because he can repair his damaged tanks in the field, and (3) because his tanks are superior to ours. Our forces were (1) originally inferior in numbers to his and do not seem to have been reinforced; it looks (2) as if we were no better able to refit an injured tank than we were in the last campaign; (3) finally, the guns of our tanks, to say nothing of other defects, are inferior in calibre and range to those of the Germans. The bravery of our men cannot compensate for such defects. The mismanagement of this campaign ought to lead to a searching inquiry into its causes. Are we even now attending to the business of refitting tanks at the front, and to improvement of their armament and the modification of their types? It seems that Lord Beaverbrook has concentrated on quantity to the neglect of quality." The Londoner wrote in his diary the same week: "One reason for Rommel's success in Libya is the efficiency of his organisation for tank repair. While British tanks are often abandoned when temporarily knocked out, Rommel has a special device for hoisting damaged tanks on to the lorries in the night, rushing them to the repair shop, and getting them hastily refitted. British tanks only occasionally have more than one life, German tanks seem to have nine. This may be explained by the fact that Rommel is himself an engineer and mechanic. An American magazine not long ago gave a fascinating account of Rommel refusing to accept any one as an officer under him who could not build a whole tank with his own hands. The article describes the astonishment of a Prussian officer of the old-fashioned monocled type searching for General Rommel and finally discovering him in a tank repair shop, stripped to the waist, working like a mechanic somewhere in the intestines of a tank."

And let it be remembered that Mr. Eden said that Singapore was lost by choice, because they had to concentrate their best equipment in Libya. And we now know the best equipment that they had. When we think of this, can a national Government ever get militarily ready to fight the Japanese and the Nazis?

It is a desperate game. Instead why not leave India to her own resources and thereby gain a moral victory before the world, and be saved the ignominy of a very probable disaster?

Sevagram, 5-7-42

M. D.

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HARIJANS AND SAVARNAS

These notes on the relations between Harijans and Savarnas, like similar ones made a few weeks ago, are a blend of bitters and sweets.

The question of the District Board school in Napa, a village in Kaira District, had been hanging fire for a long time. The Savarnas would not allow Harijan children to attend the school, and the school had to be closed down according to the Government Resolution made in this behalf. There was plenty of bad blood in consequence, the School Board had to be dragged into a court of law, and so on—facts which happily are now a thing of the past and with which the reader need not be bothered. Wiser counsels have at last prevailed, and the whole dispute has been amicably settled. A few leading men of the village and members of the local Panchayat have made it up with the School Board, by giving a written undertaking to admit Harijan children to the school, and five Harijan children were admitted as soon as the school was opened.

A Harijan hostel was opened the other day by Shri Morarji Desai at Surat. This will serve the Harijan students attending schools and colleges in Surat and hailing from villages in the District. There is accommodation, for the time being, for 20 students, but it is hoped that with more applicants desiring accommodation the citizens of Surat and the public workers there will not find it difficult to provide additional accommodation.

A vexatious and sorry chapter is that of the crematorium at Vile Parle, a Bombay suburb. Among Harijans, as amongst Savarnas, there are certain sections of people who bury their dead and some who cremate them. The crematorium at Vile Parle was sought to be used last year by some Harijans; the orthodox people who believed they were in charge of it objected; in heavy rains the poor people could not carry the dead to any other place; they broke open the lock and burnt the dead there. A fierce controversy arose, and the matter is now before a court of law—the men who claim to be members of the committee in charge of the crematorium having lodged a criminal complaint against the Harijans. This was done months ago, but we know the law's delays. Death however knows no delay. Neither should Religion or Duty know any. So even whilst the case is pending, Harijan Sevaks have dared to help the Harijans who have been cremating their dead, taking whatever risk may be in store for them.

When this matter was referred to Gandhiji last year, he had not the least hesitation in advising Harijan Sevaks to take the lead and give what help they could to the Harijans. There is room for patience and education of public opinion in the matter of temples, less in the matter of wells, but practically none in this matter. Harijans themselves may not be ready to take risks, but Gandhiji advised that it was the duty of the Harijan Sevaks to lead them and be ready to receive the first blows

on their heads—if that was to be their lot—or receive the heaviest punishment.

It is a matter of gratification therefore that reckless of the law's delays some of the Harijan Sevaks and Congress workers of the place have been unremitting in their help of the Harijans who, only a fortnight ago, cremated their dead in this public crematorium. *Quidquid multis peccatur inultum est.* (An offence that is committed by many is no offence.)

It may be possible to find some plausible ground for excluding Harijans from the use of private wells, or from one's private house or temple. But it is impossible to find any such ground for excluding Harijans from a crematorium. There should be no private crematoriums save such as may be owned by Rajas or Maharajas, though one cannot conceive even these being polluted by cremation. All who carry the dead are supposed to be polluted and have to have a purificatory bath after the cremation is over. Where then is the difference between a Harijan and a Savarna? And so far as the dead are concerned, Fire consumes all impurities without caring for caste or creed. To exclude Harijans from a crematorium is not only to disgrace one's religion but to insult the dead and insult the all-purifying Fire. One wonders if even Fire can purify such intolérant exclusion.

A fire broke out in a village in the Nagpur district on the 22nd May and most of the houses of the Harijans and the *Kotha* of the Brahmana part proprietor of the village were completely gutted. A number of people from the surrounding villages collected to render what help they could. A Harijan entered the compound of the other part proprietor—a Kunbi and Lambardar and Mukadam of the village—and picked up a brass pot for fetching water to quench the fire. On this the said Lambardar and his son and other members of the family including women belaboured the Harijan mercilessly. It is said that strongly resenting this the crowd took the law into their own hands and retaliated by beating the Lambardar and his people. The Lambardar would give no help or facility to the people and would not allow people to draw water from the well which did not belong to him but to the other part proprietor who was a Brahman and then absent from the village. Luckily a female member of the latter's family arrived and invited every one to use the well. Had it not been for this timely help, the fire would have taken long to get under control.

The Lambardar who received a beating from the crowd filed a complaint against the Mahar, charging him with theft. The police investigated the case and found the charge to be unfounded. The Harijan is still said to be suffering from the injuries he received at the hands of the Lambardar.

It is difficult to withhold one's sympathy from the Harijan and the crowd who belaboured the Lambardar in retaliation.

Sevagram, 5-7-42

M. D.

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The Conflagration

Q. — What is the difference between Nero and yourself? Nero was fiddling when Rome was burning. Will you be also fiddling in Sevagram after you have ignited the fire which you will not be able to quench?

A. — The difference will be known if match, if I have ever to light it, does not prove a 'damp quib'. Instead of fiddling in Sevagram you may expect to find me perishing in the flames of my own starting if I cannot regulate or restrain them. But I have a grouse against you. Why should you shove all the blame on to me for all that may happen by reason of my taking action for the discharge of an overdue debt and that, too, just when the discharge has become the necessary condition of my life?

In their schools the rulers teach us to sing "Britons never shall be slaves." How can the refrain enthuse their slaves? The British are pouring blood like water and squandering gold like dust in order to preserve their liberty. Or, is it their right to enslave India and Africa? Why should Indians do less to free themselves from bondage? It is misuse of language to liken to the action of Nero that of a man who, in order to escape living death, lights his own funeral pyre to end the agony.

Andhra Separation

Q. You have, no doubt unintentionally, rather adversely affected Maharaja Kumar Sir Vijaya Anand's popularity in Andhra by your ridiculing a part of Sir Vijaya's letter on Andhra separation; and do you regard Andhra separation in the same light as Pakistan, as some people in Andhra fear you do?

A. You are right in saying that I ridiculed Sir Vijaya's letter. I could take that liberty with him. But nothing could be further from my thought than to discredit him in any way. What reflection there was was meant for his informants. As his letter showed, he had given me the impressions of his informants. Everyone of us is liable to be misled by our informants. He is among the very few zamindars who have taken up the popular cause. It will be pity if the Andhras, by putting a wrong construction on my letter to him, fail to avail themselves of his services.

As to the second question, there can be no comparison between Pakistan and Andhra separation. The Andhra separation is a redistribution on a linguistic basis. The Andhras do not claim to be a separate nation having nothing in common with the rest of India. Pakistan on the other hand is a demand for carving out of India a portion to be treated as a wholly independent sovereign state. Thus there seems to be nothing common between the two.

Sevagram, 5-7-'42

An Omission

At the Goseva Sangh Conference of 1st February last held at Wardha I said: "Chaunde Maharaj... whilst he accepts my facts and even arguments..... says, 'what about the public sentiment? They somehow want to save the cow from the butcher.'" And again, "But the good Chaunde Maharaj wonders if people can be persuaded to believe that dead cow's hide is sacred."

Shri Chaunde Maharaj of Govardhan Sanstha, who was present at the meeting, came to me and told me that the remark could not be applied to him as he did not favour the purchase of cows from butchers and did not discard the use of dead cattle hide. I told him that I would mention his assurance in *Harijan*. He reminds me that the report has appeared without the mention and it is likely to harm the Institution. I am sorry I forgot to mention the conversation in *Harijan* and that my omission caused grief to the Maharaj. As to the use of dead cattle hide, I may point out that it is not enough not to discard the use of dead cattle hide, it is necessary to discard the use of slaughter hide and insist on the use of dead cattle hide where slaughter hide was used. Probably that is what his letter means but has failed to convey.

Sevagram, 3-7-'42

M. K. G.

Notice

Readers will please note that a branch of the Navajivan Karyalaya has been recently opened at Surat (Kanpith Bazar) and at Rajkot (Savani Buildings, Sadar). Copies of the three weeklies, *Harijan* (English), *Harijanbandhu* (Gujarati) and *Harijansevak* (Hindustani), and of our Gujarati monthly, *Shikshana ane Sahitya*, as also our publications, will be available there. The subscriptions for the weeklies and the monthly will also be received there.

Manager

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HARIJAN

Editor: MAHADEV DESAI

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[FIVE PICE

Notice

The next issue, to be published on 12th July, will contain *twelve pages* and will be priced at *two annas* per copy. Agents will please notify changes in their requirements, if any, by Thursday next.

Manager

FOR THE SIKH FRIENDS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Thus writes Sardar Mangal Singh:

"I wish, to bring to your notice the objections raised against the Congress and against your personal attitude towards the Sikhs. I hope you will deal with them in a proper way in *Harijan*.

(1) The first and the great point made against the Congress is that the Congress does not care for the Sikhs. No Sikh has been taken on the Working Committee or even specially invited to attend the Working Committee meetings during the last 7 years. We tell them that Working Committee is not constituted on a communal basis, but this does not carry conviction with the general Sikh masses.

(2) Several years ago while discussing the thesis of non-violence in *Young India* you said that 'Guru Govind Singh was a misguided patriot' or words to that effect. When fiery speakers mention this it makes a great sentimental appeal to the Sikhs. I think you should explain your point of view.

(3) That you are against the bearing of *Kirpan* by the Sikhs.

(4) That you said to certain Sikhs that they should either follow Guru Govind Singh or yourself.

I personally know that the last two allegations have no foundations, but lies when repeated do acquire some importance. I hope you will agree with me that some elucidation is necessary from you. This will help the nationalist Sikhs and the Congress in the Punjab."

It is painful for me to have to write on this subject. Some of the points have been discussed thread-bare. When however suspicion usurps the place of reason, it becomes most difficult to remove it. But I cannot resist the inquiry of a fellow-worker especially when he makes it to smooth his way.

The first question is really for the Congress Secretary to answer. But I can say that for years Sardar Shardul Singh Caveesher was a member of the Working Committee. It is not always possible to provide for communal representation on the Working Committee. The policy should be and is to get the best men. The fact is that the Congress

has always given the greatest consideration to the Sikh sentiment. It was for them that a special committee was appointed on the question of the colour of the National Flag. It was for them that the famous Lahore resolution on the communal question was framed. They have therefore the least cause for complaint against the Congress.

As to what I am supposed to have said about Guru Govind Singh, I can only repeat what I have said about the charge that I have no recollection whatsoever of having made the remark attributed to me. Whoever brings the charge should at least refer me to the passage in question in my writings. I have searched in vain. What is however more to the point is to know what I think about Guru Govind Singh. I have the highest regard for him. The popular belief is that it was he who gave the sword to the Khalsa. I have believed that to the extent that he did so he departed from the non-violence of his predecessors. This is not the place to examine or question the justification for the great Guru's step. A learned Sikh friend tells me that he could show that Guru Govind Singh never departed from the teachings of the preceding Gurus on non-violence. But such proof may have an academic value. The common belief as I have understood it among the Sikhs is that Guru Govind Singh accepted resort to the sword in well-defined circumstances as quite valid. Be that as it may, there never was the slightest disrespect on my part for the great Guru or the Sikh *Panth*. Indeed among the *bhajans* sung at the the Ashram prayers there are several of Guru Nanak's.

As to *Kirpans* I am afraid I must say that I do not like the wearing of *Kirpan* or the like by human beings as part of their religion. But my likes or dislikes can produce no effect on the Sikh practice. If by the question is meant whether I should vote for legislation prohibiting the wearing of *Kirpans* by the Sikhs, I can unhesitatingly say 'no' for the simple reason that I do not believe in making people non-violent by legislation.

The suggestion made in the fourth question is ridiculous. I have never considered myself as a religious teacher. I have never asked anyone to disown his own faith, in order to accept non-violence or my teaching. I have not known any religion to make violence obligatory. Most religions have permitted it, where non-violence is not possible. But I have no right to judge other religions. I entertain equal respect for all religions. I must if I expect others to respect mine.

Sevagram, 26-7-42

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A Fallacy

Q. You consider it a vital necessity in terms of non-violence to allow the Allied troops to remain in India. You also say that, as you cannot present a fool-proof non-violent method to prevent Japanese occupation of India, you cannot throw the Allies over-board. But, don't you consider that the non-violent force created by your action which will be sufficient to force the English to withdraw will be sufficiently strong to prevent Japanese occupation also? And is it not the duty of a non-violent resister to equally consider it a vital necessity to see that his country, his home and his all are not destroyed by allowing two foreign mad bulls to fight a deadly war on his soil?

A. There is an obvious fallacy in the question. I cannot all of a sudden produce in the minds of Britishers, who have been for centuries trained to rely upon their muscle for their protection, a belief which has not made a very visible impression even on the Indian mind. Non-violent force must not act in the same way as violence. The refusal to allow the Allied troops to operate on the Indian soil can only add to the irritation already caused by my proposal. The first is inevitable, the second would be wanton.

Again, if the withdrawal is to take place, it won't be due merely to the non-violent pressure. And in any case what may be enough to affect the old occupant would be wholly different from what would be required to keep off the invader. Thus we can disown the authority of the British rulers by refusing taxes and in a variety of ways. These would be inapplicable to withstand the Japanese onslaught. Therefore, whilst we may be ready to face the Japanese, we may not ask the Britishers to give up their position of vantage merely on the unwarranted supposition that we would succeed by mere non-violent effort in keeping off the Japanese.

Lastly, whilst we must guard ourselves in our own way, our non-violence must preclude us from imposing on the British a strain which must break them. That would be a denial of our whole history for the past twenty-two years.

Sevagram, 28-6-42

A Bengali Mother's Two Questions

Q. Bengal is threatened by the Japanese menace. It is time now the political workers in this province composed their differences. I believe they will readily forget their domestic squabble only if the right person mediates. Would you not exert yourself to that end and save Bengal from the impending disaster?

A. What you say is too true. But I doubt if I am the right person to mediate. A Bengali should tackle the question. I would go to Bengal today, if I had the confidence that I could perform the trick. When one comes to think of it, the differences are too trivial to need any mediation.

Q. My husband is a teacher employed in a school of Calcutta. His income is already alarm-

ingly diminished. It is apprehended in a month or so he will have no income at all. He has now seven dependants. Formerly he earned just enough to provide his family with the ordinary necessities of life. He has now nothing to fall back upon. I know my husband is patriotic and Congress-minded. But in order to be able to give us food he finds no alternative but to join war-service. What else can he do? What is your advice to those who are similarly stranded?

A. This is a very serious question. I know that joining the military is the shortest cut to bread-winning. If you and your husband are averse to all war like me, you will face starvation and prove your aversion. God will prevent you from dying of starvation. You might have to revise your way of living. Middle classes have to come down to the level of the peasantry. Then only shall we know real India and the way to deal with growing distress of the millions. But if you have no such aversion, I see no harm in your husband joining military service. He will do no worse than many are doing.

Sevagram, 29-6-42

WITH KHADI WORKERS

On the 26th of June Gandhiji gave a couple of hours to the khadi workers in India most of whom had come for the annual meeting of the All India Spinners Association. That was also the occasion of distribution of certificates to the students of the Khadi Vidyalaya who had passed their examinations this year. The Vidyalaya and the examinations are all organised by the A. I. S. A. The course is an intensive one in the theory and practice of all the processes involved in the manufacture of khadi from the selection of the cotton-seed to getting the finished product ready for market, including account-keeping in all its details. Thus the study of the theory and practice of spinning includes the detailed mechanics of the wheels and the spindle and the strings; the practice includes practice on all the varieties of wheels and taklis, and so on.

Gandhiji after distributing the certificates gave a brief benedictory speech, in which he blessed both those who had passed and those who had failed. "For," said he, "these examinations are unlike the orthodox university examinations which are at best a test of book-knowledge and depend on the whims of examiners. Here even if you do not pass in your examinations what you have learnt is not lost, it has profited the country, failure means inadequate practice or work, and the next year you will increase your knowledge and production. Then the orthodox examinations prepare the examinees at best for clerkships, and those who pass have no illusions about adding anything to the wealth of the country, while even the failures amongst you have added something to the wealth of the country, if not quite as much as those who have passed. Then there is another very vital difference. The boys in the schools and colleges pay heavy fees, but far heavier than their fees are the expenses incurred by Government on

their education. The country gets nothing by way of return for this enormous expenditure; if there is any little gain it belongs to an alien government. Then the system of examinations is most mechanical and tiring and calculated to add little to the examinees' intellectual calibre. Here the end in view is to qualify students to add more and more to the country's wealth, to stimulate originality and, apart from gaining them a living, render service of the country. One last point which if you have not grasped I want you to grasp today. Inasmuch as service of the country is the final aim, the failures have no cause for disappointment, the passes have no reason to look down upon the failures, and there is little scope for unhealthy rivalry. The students in the ordinary schools and colleges throw away their books after they have passed their examinations, for they think they are no longer going to be of use to them. Here you cannot afford to throw away your books or tools, for they are always of value, and once a khadi student is always a khadi student, he goes on adding to his knowledge and fitness as a khadi worker."

Gandhiji next addressed himself to a vital difference between spinning as practised in ancient times and as it is being taught and practised now. It is a thing which has to be borne in mind by both the taught and the teachers and the examiners, for the latter not only teach the students but teach themselves in the process. "The distinction I desire to invite your attention to is fundamental," said Gandhiji. "Our ancestors did spin and weave and produce their own cloth, but they were just spinners and weavers, toiling either for their bread or for their employers, e. g. the East India Company. There was little joy about their work, and no spirit of service or knowledge. They toiled because they could not help it, and often it was such irksome drudgery that it drove them to cut off their own fingers in order that the slave-drivers may drive them no more. Their toil was their slavery. They have left nothing for us to emulate. We have to do penance for and wipe out that slavery. Their toil would have been perfectly honourable, if there had been knowledge at the back of it, as also the desire for the country's freedom, the determination not to bend the knee to the slave-driver, and a sense of art. A revival of the industry means adoption of all these life-giving virtues, it means infusing new life into the dead bones of the old industry."

Questions and Answers

The first question discussed was about adding to the capital by making collections and raising loans. The collections could, it was explained, be made by every one of the branches, but they should be made on behalf of the A. I. S. A., which must determine the way of their disposal. Gandhiji had no objection to raising loans, but those who advanced loans must be told, in this uncertain time of war, they were taking obvious risks, though perhaps no more than deposits in banks. If we survive the war and the terrible struggle ahead, we should repay every pie, but if we don't survive, they stand every

risk of losing their money. It is likely that no one would care to advance loans. It was better therefore to concentrate on self and sacrificial spinning, and on getting gifts of yarn and cotton.

"But those who advance loans to us may have another fear," some one asked. Even as it is there is the obvious risk of war, but by advancing loans to us they may feel that they add to their risk." "Then," said Gandhiji, "let them know they will have earned the merit of having lost money in a good cause."

"Would the struggle involve the khadi workers?" was another question.

"I am not going to make a call to the khadi workers", said Gandhiji. "But if there is a general conflagration khadi workers cannot escape it, *should* not escape it. You must know the full implications of that beautiful phrase, 'livery of freedom' applied to khadi by Jawaharlal. Khadi must not fetter us. You must also understand that I am not thinking of civil disobedience or non-cooperation of old. But there may be quixotic and arbitrary orders given to the people in the midst of whom we are working. We would reason with the authorities, but if they do not listen, we might be involved in spite of ourselves. Therefore no hard and fast rules can be laid down this time. Let us go on as usual unmindful of risks. Our inflexible rule is not to take part in politics, not to meddle with them."

There were a number of administrative questions asked and discussed. Summing up Gandhiji said: "All these may well prove irrelevant before the crisis that faces us. You must make no mistake about it. A conflagration is imminent and let us not have the slightest thought of saving our skins. If we do, we shall have plied our wheels and worn khadi in vain. Let it never be said the A. I. S. A. was an institution which would run no risk."

And with this he invited the workers to vivisection him regarding his new move. "If you feel it is mid-summer madness you must unhesitatingly tell me so. If you think anything I am doing is prompted by anger or passion you must not spare me. I think all that I am doing is prompted by the highest sense of non-violence and therefore for universal good. My readiness to allow foreign armies to stay in India for their own self-protection and for saving China should be enough proof of this."

There were questions and answers on this crucial question of foreign troops, for it was the only plank in the new programme to which many could not reconcile themselves. I will not give here Gandhiji's reply, as he discusses the question in this week's leading article.

Sevagram, 29-6-42

M. D.

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HARIJAN

July 5

1942

OH! THE TROOPS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I have to pay a heavy price for having drawn up an entrancing picture of a Free India without a single British soldier. Friends are confounded now to discover that my proposal admits of the presence of British and even American troops under any circumstance at all. In vain do I argue that the Allied troops, if they remain, will do so not to exercise authority over the people, or at India's expense, but they will remain under treaty with the Government of Free India at the United Nations' expense for the sole purpose of repelling Japanese attack and helping China.

It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during the period of the war is to hand over India and China to Japan, and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contemplated by me. The only answer, therefore, to give was to suffer the presence of the troops but under circumstance the reverse of the existing. They will remain under permission of Free India and not at all in the role of masters but of friends.

My proposal presupposes shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves, we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

May I suggest also that it is altogether premature and wrong to pore over the weakest points of a very difficult project which may not be accepted even with the troops remaining in India. It will be most assuredly an event of the century and may be a turning point in the war if Britain can honestly perform the act of renouncing India with all that the renunciation would mean. The virtue and the value of the renunciation in my opinion will not be affected in the least, because the Allied troops will be operating in India with the sole object of preventing Japanese attack. After all India is as much interested as the Allies in warding off the attack and yet under my proposal India will not have to pay a single pie over the expenses of the troops.

As I have already said in the previous issue of *Harijan*, the British acceptance of my proposal may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of the troops. I would therefore ask the doubters to concentrate their attention upon the grandeur of the proposed renunciation and help to the utmost of their power the fruition of the great act. Let them not dread the presence of the troops in India for the purpose indicated but regard it as an inevitable part of the proposal so as to make it not only justifiable but fool-proof. So far as I can see, Free India will run no risk by their presence. Her freedom will certainly suffer no diminution thereby.

The implications of my proposal are:

- (1) India becomes free of all financial obligation to Britain;
- (2) The annual drain to Great Britain stops automatically;
- (3) All taxation ceases except what the replacing government imposes or retains;
- (4) The deadweight of an all-powerful authority keeping under subjection the tallest in the land is lifted at once;

(5) In short, India begins a new chapter in her national life, as I shall hope to affect the fortunes of the war with non-violence as her predominant sanction. This non-violence will no longer take the shape of non-cooperation and the like. It will express itself in her ambassadors going to the Axis powers not to beg for peace but to show them the futility of war for achieving an honourable end. This can only be done if and when Britain sheds the gains of perhaps the most organized and successful violence the world has seen.

All this may not come to pass. I do not mind. It is worth fighting for, it is worth staking all that the nation has.

Sevagram, 27-6-42

NOW IS THE MOMENT

Prof. Harold Laski's book *Where Do We Go from here?* is by far the most important "Penguin Special" published during the war. His main argument is that the way to victory lies through the revolt of the masses against their conquerors in the occupied countries, but that that revolt can come only by Britain setting the example by building a just and equal society. This again depends upon, what Prof. Laski calls, "the cleansing of our democracy" which has two aspects, viz., "our position as an empire", and secondly "our authority to persuade the peoples of the European continent that we genuinely seek a world-peace which definitely rules out the possibility of resuming war." Empire has, until now, meant life-trade, raw material, opening for successful career to thousands of young men, a standard of life for the local proletariat—but it is that Empire that has caused war and now is synonymous with death, as I showed in a previous article in these columns. Prof. Laski takes as an illustration of the Problem of Empire—the most pivotal of all—India. "India stands before us to-day," says Prof. Laski, "demanding freedom from our paramount power as unmistakably as Poland or Czechoslovakia demand freedom from the paramount power of Germany over them," and he describes vividly how that "paramount power" is being maintained. He says:

"Year by year, to maintain it, even in the revised form of 1936, we have to resort to special powers, the exercise of undemocratic authority, the wide use of the power to imprison and to flog. The few Indians of position we can produce to applaud our rule are men whom we have elevated for that purpose, who without the elevation, as both we and India know, would be against us and not for us. The main interest we support in India, apart from our own financial interest, is a

mass of feudal princes of whom, with not more than six exceptions, it can, so far as the last half century is concerned, be said with literal accuracy, that the character of their governance competes, in barbarism and squalor, with that of the outlaws in Europe.

"The character of our rule in India, maintained in defiance of Indian demands, has long stained our reputation for plain dealing all over the world; until the advent of Hitler and Mussolini, it was the classic example of imperialist exploitation. We are squarely faced from India with a demand, insistently maintained, for self-government; and we know, within ourselves, that sooner or later we must yield to it, even though the risk to our interests of so yielding is a formidable one. But we cling to the maintenance of that interest by every pretext and device we can discover. The very statesmen who manipulate these pretexts and devices are most prolific in the announcement of their yearning for the fulfilment of India's ambition; Sir Samuel Hoare was even shameless enough to represent the Act of 1935, which ingeniously multiplied every protective device discoverable of reaction, as a long step on the road to that fulfilment. We announce that we shall put no obstacle in the way of Indian freedom; we only ask that all Indians of every sort shall first agree upon its pattern. And since that agreement is not forthcoming, we continue to govern India for our own purposes. Meanwhile, in the name of the Indian people, we ourselves take this and that decision on its behalf; and then proudly thank India for its generosity to us; or accept this gift or that from one or other of the Indian princes — their method of insuring their further protection from us — which we know is a gift mostly wrung from the misery of their unhappy subjects, and then exhibit these gifts as the proof of Indian "loyalty". *I do not know how far we deceive ourselves by this technique; empire possesses a large capacity for self-deception. I do know that we deceive no people beyond the boundaries of our empire — least of all the Indian people themselves.*" (Italics ours.)

After stating the naked fact Prof. Laski proceeds to offer a solution which does credit to his sense of justice, but which now would seem out of keeping with the reality of the situation. He suggests a declaration that "self-government will begin to operate within a year of the conclusion of peace", the offer of a constituent assembly, the submitting of communal differences to independent arbitration, and so on. The book was published towards the end of the year 1940, and the solution, had it been applied then, might have been timely and might have worked admirably. But we have found that all solutions offered since then have been vitiated by the policy followed until now and described in the paragraph just quoted. In fact Prof. Laski is not unaware of this, for he says: "But as long as every vested interest in India is, like the Moslem interest, encouraged, openly or secretly, to believe that it will get better terms from dependence upon us than from a real attempt at accommodation with other Indian interests, of course agreement between them is not forthcoming. We patronize these dissidents from unity in the same way, though much

more subtly, as the Conservative Party has so long patronized the separation of Ulster; and with the same evil consequences."

Now that is exactly what the Cripps' proposals gave ample proof of. But it is interesting to note that even Prof. Laski had no idea of the mischief that these proposals were fraught with, for he supported the proposals in advance in an article written a week before Sir Stafford Cripps' departure.

The fact is, as Prof. Laski has himself said, the "empire possesses a large capacity for self-deception", and there is no greater enemy of man than self-deception. The deception lies in the belief that those who hold the empire can judge the interests of those they hold in subjection, and to say the least the Cripps' proposals are vitiated by that belief. In fact, as a proposition Prof. Laski himself expounds it most ably:—

"The point I am making is the simple one that *empire is a handicap to freedom whenever its subjects deny the validity of its maintenance.* At that stage, it must either become a partnership or it degenerates into a tyranny. And it is particularly dangerous to permit that degeneration when it offers to our enemies an opportunity of reproach to which we have no adequate response. The plea made by our enemies that the real nature of our dominion is shown by the way in which we maintain our rule in India, we cannot answer by reference to a single Indian representative able freely to secure the full support of his own people. We can answer that plea only by saying that we are satisfied with our achievement there. *But we have, in truth, no more right to constitute ourselves judges in our own cause than the Fascist leaders possess;* less even, since we deny them that right so soon as its attempted application touches ourselves. A nation can justly stand as trustee of another people when it can be shown that no vested interest of its own is safeguarded by that trusteeship, and when a detached observer would admit, first, that the people so ruled do not claim freedom from trusteeship, and second, when the objective results of its exercise are clearly and mainly for the benefit of that people. *Judged by these standards, it is, I think, clear that the sooner we end our paramountcy over India the better for Indians and for ourselves. And there is no moment more fitting to end it than in a war where we claim to be the world-defenders of democracy and freedom.*" (Italics ours)

That is the barest truth. No promises to be carried out after peace, but while the war is going on, and there is no better way of ending the paramountcy than by an orderly withdrawal, for it has one saving virtue, viz., those who hold the Empire cease to be judges of the interests of those held in subjection.

Sevagram, 27-6-42

M. D.

Home and Village Doctor

By Satis Chandra Dasgupta

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FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT IN INDIA

The Friends' Ambulance Unit is a voluntary body of workers who share Quaker views on peace and war. Conscientiously unable to help in the war directly or in organisations set up to achieve ends by violent means, they still would share the sorrows and sufferings of a war-torn world and are therefore pledged to relieve suffering and heal the wounds of war wherever their services may be acceptable. They number about 700, are all unpaid, receiving only board and lodging, and pledged to go wherever they may be required. They have all received training in first aid, stretcher work, and anti-gas, and also training in hospitals. The Unit has worked, during the present war, in London and many parts of England, in Finland, Norway and Greece, in Central China and on the Burma Road, in Libya and Syria, and in hospitals in Germany, Poland and Hongkong.

After Japan entered the war some of the members felt that their experience in the bombed areas in Britain might prove of value in India, and it was proposed to send a small band to work, if possible, in cooperation with the volunteer agencies here. Accordingly a band of eight (six men and two women), with Prof. Horace Alexander of Woodbrooke College (Birmingham) as the leader, were told off to go to India, and Prof. Alexander and Mr. Richard Symonds have already arrived. Prof. Alexander is an old friend, belonging as he does to the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and having been a sympathetic student of Indian affairs for several years. Mr. Symonds is much younger and is not long down from Oxford, but has had considerable experience of the work to which they have been called, having organised medical aid in London shelters and done active evacuation work. The others who have not yet arrived and are still on the high seas are Messrs. Alec Horsefield, Brian Croves, Kenneth Criffin, Glanmore Davies, and Miss Jeane Coffle and Miss Pamela Bankhart, who have all had experience of work in the bombed areas in England.

"We were wondering if it was auspicious for an English party to arrive in India, when you were asking the British to withdraw," said Prof. Alexander with a kindly smile. "Agatha suggested that we might have a party from India to work with us, and make of our party a mixed party."

"My first writing," said Gandhiji, "did, I am afraid, give rise to that kind of fear. That was because I had not given expression to the whole idea in my mind. It is not my nature to work out and produce a finished thing all at once. The moment a question was asked me, I made it clear that no physical withdrawal of every Englishman was meant, I meant the withdrawal of the British domination. And so every Englishman in India can convert himself into a friend—as you have come as Friends—and remain here. The condition is that every Englishman has to dismount from the horse he is riding and cease to be monarch of all he surveys and identify himself

with the humblest of us. The moment he does it, he will be recognised as a member of the family. His role as a member of the ruling caste must end for ever. And so when I said 'withdraw', I meant 'withdraw as masters'. The demand for withdrawal had another implication. You have to withdraw, irrespective of the wishes of anybody here. You do not need the consent of a slave to give him freedom. The slave often hugs the chains of slavery. They become part of his flesh. You have to tear them asunder and throw them away. You must withdraw because it is your duty to do so, and not wait for the unanimous consent of all the sections or groups in India.

"There is thus no question of the moment being inauspicious for you. On the contrary, if you can assimilate my proposal, it is the most auspicious moment for you to arrive in India. You will meet many Englishmen here. They may have entirely misunderstood what I have said, and you have to explain to them what exactly I want them to do.

"Really speaking, therefore, this should become the major part of your mission, and even the India Office who facilitated your coming here cannot possibly misunderstand you. You have, therefore, not only the humanitarian mission—there may not be any bombing here, and in this vast country even if there is bombing you may not be able to reach everywhere—but you have also this peculiar mission of interpretation and reconciliation. And it is well perhaps that your mission begins with me. Begin it with finding out what exactly is at the back of my mind by putting to me all the questions that may be agitating you."

That put both the friends at ease and prompted them to try to understand the whole of the background of Gandhiji's mind. And in this connection I may mention a curious but very significant fact. When Sir Stafford Cripps' mission was announced, Prof. Horace Alexander and Miss Agatha Harrison had sent Gandhiji a cable reminding him of the phrase Gandhiji himself had used, viz., "Andrews' legacy" meaning thereby that in memory of Andrews the best Englishmen and the best Indians should come together to bring about a permanent understanding between England and India. "Here," their cable seemed to say in effect, "is one of the best Englishmen coming to India. You had better settle with him, as there is a great opportunity."

It was in reply to this cable that Gandhiji wrote a long letter to Prof. Horace Alexander soon after the failure of the Cripps' mission,—a letter in which he gave expression for the first time to the demand for British withdrawal. He had not discussed it with any soul on earth, but as he was writing the letter the thing that was, so to say, cooking in his mind ever since his return from Delhi came to his pen. "Sir Stafford" he said in that letter, "has come and gone. How nice it would have been if he had not come with that dismal mission. . . How could the British Government at this critical hour have behaved as they did? Why should they have sent proposals without discussing them with the

principal parties? Not one single party was satisfied. In trying to please all, the proposals pleased none.

"I talked to him frankly but as a friend, if for nothing else, for Andrews' sake. I told him that I was speaking to him with Andrews' spirit as my witness. I made suggestions, but all to no avail. As usual, they were not practical. I had not wanted to go. I had nothing to say being 'anti-all-wars'. I went because he was anxious to see me. All this I mention in order to give you the background. I was not present throughout the negotiations with the Working Committee. I came away. You know the result. It was inevitable. The whole thing has left a bad taste in the mouth."

And now comes the key paragraph: "My firm opinion is that the British should leave India now in an orderly manner and not run the risk that they did in Singapore, Malay and Burma. That act would mean courage of a high order, confession of human limitations, and right doing by India."

The letter was sent by air mail on the 22nd April, but Prof. Horace Alexander had left England before it could reach him. He was agreeably surprised when he found that he was the first person with whom Gandhiji had shared his great thought.

Gandhiji's talk was almost a commentary on the parts of the letter I have quoted. "You will see that I have used the words 'orderly withdrawal'. I had, when I used the phrase, Burma and Singapore in mind. It was a disorderly withdrawal from there. For they left Burma and Malay neither to God, nor to anarchy, but to the Japanese. Here I say: 'Don't repeat that story here. Don't leave India to Japan, but leave India to Indians in an orderly manner,'" said he, concluding a long talk. The whole talk, even as the letter I have reproduced, was inspired by the spirit of C. F. A., and the idea of asking the British to withdraw was conceived in the friendliest spirit, as it was done with a remembrance of C. F. A. and all his noble work. As Gandhiji said, "So you have now to do what Andrews did—understand me, pitilessly cross-examine me, and then if you are convinced be my messenger", Prof. Alexander felt overwhelmed and said: "We dare not assume his mantle. We can but try."

They propose to meet various people and see things for themselves before they decide where to start work. And they should take a little time, as their companions will not arrive until a week or more. Their work will be in cooperation both with the A. R. P. agencies and voluntary organizations, as the case may be.

M. D.

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BADSHAH KHAN'S POPULARITY

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The Associated Press has circulated the following note about Khan Sahab:

"The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has released the following statement:

"We warn the public against the false propaganda that is being carried on against Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the undisputed leader of the Pathans, and the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, in certain sections of the press. It has been hinted that the differences have arisen among the workers and party-politics is raising its ugly head. Not a single Khudai Khidmatgar has so far resigned. They are all united like one man under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's leadership. All talk about parties among them has no foundation whatsoever. All these so-called differences etc. exist only in the imagination of a few interested people who are craving for offices and think that by encouraging such talk they can gain their end. The Government is at the back of all such propaganda. But these people have no following among the Frontier masses. Every true nationalist in the Frontier clearly realises that we can have nothing to do with the British Government in India, much less with offices. Whatever attraction the parliamentary programme may have elsewhere in India, it has certainly no place in the Frontier.

"Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan's peaceful constructive humanitarian work among the villages for the maintenance of internal security and self-sufficiency in matters of food and cloth has further endeared him to the people—especially the poor. He has been hoping to carry his message of peace and good-will even to the neighbouring tribes. He has been devoting all his energy to raise a non-violent and peaceful army who can render true service to the people under difficult days ahead. What the Government has failed to achieve at the cost of millions of rupees he is attempting to do with purely voluntary help. He deserves the sympathy and cooperation of every man, woman and child of the Frontier in this noble work. We hope that the Frontier masses will respond to his call and the Press and journalists of India who have the true interests of the country at heart will take a dispassionate interest in his work."

The Frontier Provincial Congress Committee has done well to pass the resolution and circulate the note. But Badshah Khan's reputation rests on much more solid ground than the resolution of the Frontier Provincial Congress Committee. It rests on the strength of selfless service rendered for nearly a quarter of a century and the affection of the people won through that service. In spite of traducers Khan Sahab has come triumphant through every ordeal so far. And I have little doubt that when the next test comes, he will show the same popularity as he has shown before.

Sevagram, 30-6-42

Constructive Programme

Some Suggestions

By Rajendra Prasad. Price As. 4. Postage 1 Anna.

Can be had at Navajivan Office, Post Box 105, Ahmedabad; 130 Princess St., Bombay; Surat and Rajkot.

Notes

Jodhpur

Shri Sriprakash who went to Jodhpur at my request to do whatever he could to ease the atmosphere, interview the authorities and know their version of the affair has returned and given me his report which leaves no doubt that free use has been made by the authorities of the lathi in order to repress the people. He nevertheless tells me that some members of the Lok Parishad have not always been discreet in their language. He was told by the authorities that they had no objection to the Lok Parishad holding meetings and asking for responsible government so long as the language kept within bounds. He also tells me that the Jodhpur Government are anxious to reduce to some kind of order the admitted irresponsibility of Jagirdars, but that the passage from feudalism to legalism must take some time. So far as the treatment of political prisoners is concerned, Shri Sriprakash has hope that it would be better, though he has also hope that, given some accommodation on the part of the local workers, there should be no political prisoners at all. If all his hopes are fulfilled, the visit although brought about accidentally, will have borne ample result and the hunger-strike of the prisoners and the sad death of Balmukund Bisa would not have gone in vain. Shri Sriprakash tells me too that though the death was due somewhat, no doubt, to bad prison accommodation, there was no callousness on the part of the prison authorities. Deaths will occur even in the best of circumstances. We may not therefore always blame authority whenever a death occurs in a prison. Every case has to be examined and judged on merits. I understand that Balmukund Bisa was a very fine worker. He leaves a large family to mourn him. It is hoped that the citizens of Jodhpur will provide for the widow and children to whom I send my condolences.

Shri Sriprakash has brought me a leaflet from Beawar, which contains language which a satyagrahi will not use. It is to be hoped that the workers will be careful in the choice of the language they use. I would ask them to keep themselves in touch with Shri (not Dr. as I had called him by mistake) Kachru who will be in Jodhpur till the whole trouble has subsided.

Sevagram, 29-6-42

Hooliganism

The report of hooliganism at Rajaji's meeting in Matunga makes painful reading. Has Rajaji lost every title to respect because he has taken what seems to be an unpopular view? He went to Matunga on invitation. He was entitled to a patient hearing. Those who did not share his views might have abstained from attending the meeting, but having gone there they should have given him a hearing. They might have cross-questioned him. Those who tarred him and created a disturbance have disgraced themselves and have harmed their cause. Their way is neither the way to Swaraj

nor 'Akhand Hindustan'. It is to be hoped that hooliganism of Matunga will be the last exhibition of barbarism. The calmness, good humour, presence of mind and determination that Rajaji showed that trying time were worthy of him. These must bring him many admirers, if not even followers. For people generally do not weigh the pros and cons of a problem. They follow their heroes. And Rajaji has never lacked the qualities that go to make a hero.

Sevagram, 28-6-42

M. K. G.

A Correction

A certain misunderstanding has been caused by the figures regarding hours of work given in the note on "Education through Handicrafts" in *Harijan* of 21-6-42. The total hours of work for each grade do not represent the hours devoted by all the children in that grade in the 27 basic schools; but the sum-total of hours actually devoted by one child of that grade in each of the 27 schools—in other words, the total hours devoted by 27 representative children of that grade in the 27 basic schools.

M. D.

Basic Training Centre at Sevagram

A training centre of basic education will be opened at Sevagram by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh on August 1, 1942, to prepare workers and teachers of basic education both men and women.

Candidates seeking admission in the training centre should have faith in Gandhiji's constructive programme, and enthusiasm to work for the same. They should also be healthy and capable of putting in eight hours of strenuous work per day during their period of training. Their standard of general knowledge should not be below that of the present matriculation or its equivalent, but candidates of higher academic qualification will be preferred. Knowledge of English, however, will not be considered essential. Every candidate must bring a written assurance, either individually or on behalf of an institution, of working in the field of basic education after the completion of his or her training.

Institutions and individuals seeking further information should write to the Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram, Wardha, for the prospectus.

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